

Afghan rebels agree to U.N. truce

PESHAWAR (R) — Afghan factions seeking to topple President Burhanuddin Rabbani said on Wednesday they were ready to observe a four-day unconditional ceasefire. The anti-Rabbani coordination council led by Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and northern Warlord General Abdul Rashid Dostum said in a statement the United Nations must set a date for the ceasefire. The U.N. secretary-general's special representative on Afghanistan, Satorius Mousouris, had called for an unconditional ceasefire last Monday after a month of fierce factional fighting largely concentrated in Kabul. Mr. Mousouris had suggested a ceasefire be followed by internationally supervised talks leading to elections for a new Afghan government. "We are ready to hold a four-day temporary ceasefire without any condition," said a council communiqué issued in the northwestern Pakistani town of Peshawar. "It is up to the United Nations to fix a date for the ceasefire." It said the council was willing to discuss with a U.N. mission the demilitarisation of Kabul and handing over control of the city to a group of local guerrilla commanders.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز مؤسسة صحفية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية والرأي

EC Commission official begins visit

AMMAN (J.T.) — Eberhard Rhein, director of the Mediterranean, Near East and Middle East division of the Commission of European Communities (CEC), arrived here Wednesday for a three-day visit to Jordan. Mr. Rhein, one of the key EC Commission officials directly in charge of assistance programmes, is expected to be received by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali, Planning Minister Ziad Fariz and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Tala Al Hassan today. Cooperation between Jordan and EC and the Commission's role in supporting Middle East peace through development projects are expected to be the key theme for Mr. Rhein's talks here.

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Water reserves boosted

AMMAN (J.T.) — The rain that fell in Jordan since the start of the present winter season has replenished a number of desert earth dams and raised the water storage level in the main dams to more than 60 per cent of total capacity, according to a statement Wednesday by Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) Secretary General Abdul Aziz Wishah. The total amount of water estimated to have been stored in Jordan's main dams is 65 million cubic metres out of a total capacity of 110 million, said Dr. Wishah in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

The lion's share of the rain water to reach the dams this winter was collected by the King Talal Dam which received 10 million cubic metres since the start of the rainy season, Dr. Wishah said, noting that the last few days rains were responsible for at least seven million of this amount which flowed towards the King Talal reservoir.

Dr. Wishah said that the dam, the largest in Jordan, now holds around 48 million cubic metres out of a total capacity of 80 million. According to Dr. Wishah, the Wadi Al Arab Dam, whose water feeds the King Abdullah Canal in the Jordan Valley, now holds 10 million cubic metres, Sharhabil Dam followed by (three million), Kafrein near Karamah (1.8 million) and Wadi Shueib Dam (one million).

The recent rains helped to replenish some desert earth dams like Qatranch, Swagah and Rajil dams, Dr. Wishah added.

Reassuring farmers that the amounts of water in the dams in store for irrigation in the Jordan Valley were sufficient, Dr. Wishah said that the rainy season was only half over, expressing hope that more rain in February and March would replenish all the dams.

The Department of Meteorology forecast scattered showers for Thursday morning.

A department spokesman said that while the rain was expected to stop completely Thursday afternoon, the weather would remain very cold, with temperatures not rising above 10 degrees during the day and dropping to two at night.

Referring to the rains of the past two days, the department said that Ajloun and Salt received their highest amounts.

Deputies demand Malhas substantiate his charge

Allegations of violations of food and medicine regulations go before Lower House of Parliament

By Ayman Al Safadi
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Minister of Health Abdul Rahim Malhas Wednesday came under fire from deputies who challenged him to prove his allegations that a good quantity of food and medicine that reaches the

market is unfit for consumption.

Lawmakers also criticised Dr. Malhas for failing to implement the law. Deputy Abdul Raouf Al Rawabdeh told a special session of the House held to discuss allegations made by Dr. Malhas in a newspaper interview two weeks ago.

In the interview with a weekly Arabic tabloid, Dr. Malhas was quoted as saying that there was a deficiency in legislation governing the sale of food and medicine and that a "mafia" of food and drug merchants were trying "to feed us the garbage of the industrialised world."

Legislators said the minister's allegations should be taken "very seriously" and a thorough investigation should be launched immediately.

If the charges are proven true, said Mr. Rawabdeh, people who are proven guilty should be referred to court and punished.

But if they prove false, he said, the government and Dr. Malhas should shoulder the legal responsibility for shaking public confidence in the safety of drugs and medicines and "hurting Jordan's reputation and its national economy."

Mr. Rawabdeh, a former minister of health, said that if



Parliament Secretary-General Saleb Zoubi (right) takes a file from Health Minister Abdul Rahim Malhas following the minister's address to the Lower House on Wednesday (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

Unknown group claims Maaytah assassination

BEIRUT (Agencies) — A hitherto unknown organisation has claimed responsibility for the killing of Jordanian diplomat Nabeel Imran Maaytah and warned Norway against hosting any more Arab-Israeli peace talks.

An anonymous caller for the so-called Al Awja Palestinian organisation told Al Safir that his group was "opposed to the establishment of peace with the Zionist enemy (Israel)." "All traitors, wherever they may be, will meet the same fate as the Jordanian diplomat," who was shot dead by a gunman outside his Beirut home Saturday, the caller with a "fake Palestinian accent" said, Al Safir reported.

He also "threatened strikes on Norwegian interests in the Middle East if Palestinian-Zionist meetings continue to be held on Norwegian territory," the daily added.

For several months Norway hosted secret talks between

Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) which led to the signing in Washington on Sept. 13 of a limited autonomy accord.

Jordan is also engaged in peace talks with Israel along with the PLO, Lebanon and Syria.

It was the first such claim since Mr. Maaytah, 42, was shot dead in his car.

There was no way to authenticate the claim and, apart from opposing the peace process, there was no clue what the group's objectives are.

Al Safir said the caller was trying to fake a Palestinian accent.

Awja is a town in the Jericho region of the Israeli-occupied West Bank and is expected to be under Palestinian control once a limited autonomy agreement is finalised.

Awja is a farming village with one of the West Bank's major water wells.

In Jordan, meanwhile, Western and Arab diplomats

said they believed Maaytah's assassination was carried out by the Fateh Revolutionary Council, led by Abo Nidal.

Jordan joins probe

Two Jordanian officials arrived in Beirut Wednesday to join the investigations into the killing of the Jordanian diplomat.

Officials said Hamza Abdul Qader, a Jordanian Foreign Ministry councillor, and Colonel Mohammad Al Haddad of the general security forces will take part in the investigations.

Mr. Maaytah, first secretary of the Jordanian Embassy, was killed by a lone gunman who pumped several bullets into his head and chest Saturday.

Witnesses said the gunman and an accomplice fled on foot.

Lebanese political sources said radicals opposed to Arab-Israeli peace talks could be behind Mr. Maaytah's assassination — the first of a diplomat in Lebanon since the end of the 1975-90 civil war.

Ekeus in Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Senior U.N. envoy Rolf Ekeus opened talks with Iraqi officials on Wednesday to discuss the prospects for lifting the oil embargo after the launch of long-term arms monitoring.

Mr. Ekeus, head of a U.N. commission in charge of disarming post-war Iraq, met Foreign Minister Mohammad Said Al Sahaf and the head of Iraq's Military Industrialisation body, General Amer Rashid.

The deputy director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Maurizio Ziffero, also took part.

As Mr. Ekeus and Mr. Ziffero arrived in Baghdad earlier Wednesday, the official media accused the U.N. official of trying to delay the launch of the system of long-term surveillance so as to keep the U.N. embargo in place.

But Mr. Ekeus called for a speeding up of the process.

"I will inform the Iraqi authorities, at a high level, on the situation in the (U.N.) Security Council about the prospects of quick developments and the quick release of the sanctions and the oil embargo," he told reporters.

"I expect them to help us preserve the momentum we have already started. That is our aim number one. Aim number two is to speed up the developments in the interests of both the United Nations and Iraq," the Swede said.

His talks, notably with Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz, would "touch on a number of political and some technical questions" related to long-term monitoring. The mission would last three or four days, said Mr. Ekeus.

Mr. Aziz, in an interview published Wednesday in the Athens magazine Ena, argued that the embargo should be lifted soon because Iraq had already complied with the 1991 Gulf war.

"The most intolerable thing about the continuing embargo is undoubtedly the human aspect, because even during the war the army did not suffer as much as the civilian population," he said.

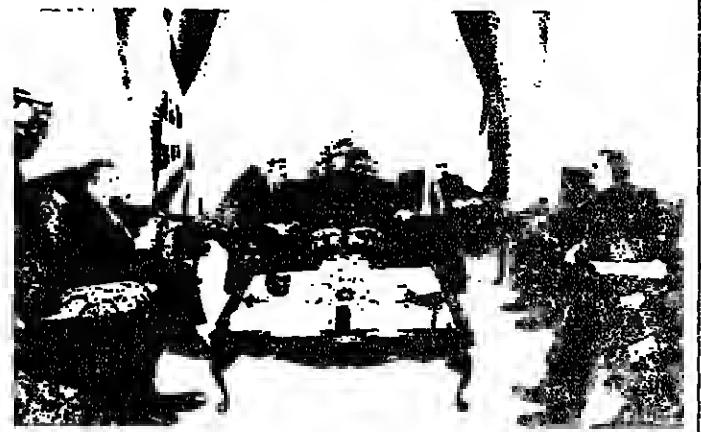
"Iraq has kept to its commitments and most members of the Security Council, except the United States, are in favour of lifting the embargo soon," said the deputy premier.

Meeting on refugees reviewed

HIS ROYAL Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, received at the Royal Court Wednesday Mr. Govica Patricio, head of the International Institute for International Law in San Remo, Italy, and an accompanying delegation.

They discussed a meeting which the institute would hold in Amman Friday in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for the Refugees (UNHCR) office. The Cairo declaration on the State of Refugees in the Arab World will be the main focus of the meeting.

Mohammad Boukri, head of the Middle East department of the UNHCR, attended the meeting with Prince Hassan



(see photo). He said he talks covered questions related to refugees and the UNHCR's work to improve the condition of displaced people in the region.

Earlier, the Regent met with Minister of Justice Taher Hikmat and a number of senior Justice Ministry officials and learnt about a number of matters pursued by the minister to promote the work of the judiciary system.

While at the ministry, the Regent received a delegation from the bar association led by its president, Kamal Naser, who discussed a number of issues of concern to Jordanian lawyers.

Dr. Nasser talked in particular about the training of new lawyers and the work of the Judicial Institute.

He put forth proposals for upgrading the law profession of practising law in Jordan.

Rabin rules out early peace deal with PLO

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said on Wednesday Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) were still weeks away from reaching an accord overcoming obstacles to an Israeli troop pullout from the occupied territories.

"Certainly in a week this matter will not be completed. Without a miracle, it will take a number of weeks. There are no sacred dates," Mr. Rabin said, further dampening hopes for an imminent agreement.

Near the occupied West Bank city of Hebron, unknown assailants shot and seriously wounded three Israelis, riddling their car with bullets before fleeing.

Military sources said a leaflet found nearby was signed by the Muslim fundamentalist Hamas movement, which opposes the peace talks.

PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat said on Tuesday he hoped to sign an accord with Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres next week that would give the go-ahead to the withdrawal as specified in a September peace accord.

In the United States, Mr. Peres said he could not set an exact date "but I believe it can be done in a matter of one, two or three weeks — no more than that."

Mr. Rabin said marathon talks between Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres at the weekend

failed to fully resolve even the limited number of core issues they tackled in the Swiss resort of Davos.

He said outside observers underestimated the number of details still to be resolved on issues such as control of crossings between autonomous zones and neighbouring Arab states, and the division of authority between Israeli security forces and a future Palestinian police force.

"People are not aware about the complexity, and I don't want to start to implement (the withdrawal) before overall agreement is reached and signed," Mr. Rabin said.

He said preventing serious friction between Jewish settlers and Arabs under future self-rule was at the heart of the impasse over the pullout, which was to have begun in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank town of Jericho seven weeks ago.

Israeli and PLO negotiators have not yet set a date for further talks on Palestinian autonomy, PLO chief negotiator Nabil Shaath said Wednesday.

Shaath denied an earlier Israeli Television report that talks would resume in Cairo Wednesday.

Mr. Rabin's spokesman said on Tuesday Mr. Arafat and Mr. Peres might meet in Cairo next week, but nothing had been scheduled and there were

no plans for a signing ceremony.

Mr. Rabin turned aside reporters' suggestions he and army officers opposed concessions offered by Mr. Peres in Davos.

The two are to confer on the talks when Mr. Peres returns home later this week. "It is preferable to clarify matters absolutely, because the problems are complex," Mr. Rabin said.

Israel Radio said Mr. Rabin had said he trusts Syrian President Hafez Al Assad more than Mr. Arafat.

Mr. Rabin, who was speaking at a dinner with writers on Tuesday night, "stressed that Assad was a head of state who always respected the interim accords he signed with Israel, whereas we have never been able to check whether Yasser Arafat keeps to his promises," the radio said.

Mr. Rabin said under such circumstances "things must move in stages with Arafat. So we can be sure he keeps his word," one of the writers, Emir Amir, told the radio.

The daily Yediot Aharonot, in its report on the dinner, quoted Mr. Rabin as saying Mr. Arafat "is under pressure from all sides."

"He says one thing and two weeks later doesn't honour his commitments, and moreover

(Continued on page 5)

U.S. sees human rights deteriorating in Mideast

WASHINGTON (AP) — Human rights in the Middle East continued to deteriorate, the U.S. State Department said Tuesday in a report critical of allies as well as long-time foes.

The department, in its annual global assessment of abuses, called Iran a "major abuser" and dubbed Iraq's record "abysmal."

U.S. ally, Israel, was accused of mistreating Palestinian prisoners in Israeli-occupied territories.

Human rights "continue to be pervasively abused" in Saudi Arabia and further deteriorated in Egypt, two Arab allies of the United States. Israel and Egypt are its biggest military aid recipients.

The report said there was some progress in Kuwait in 1993, but the country American soldiers helped rescue in the Gulf war was cited for a mixed record.

The report said there was no basic change in Syria's denial of many basic human rights, with several thousand people still imprisoned without trial and incidents of arbitrary arrest, systematic torture and the denial of free speech.

press, association and worker rights.

President Bill Clinton met with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad last month during Mr. Clinton's European trip. The report said Syria was ruled by an authoritarian regime with "some of the trappings of democratic government."

Details from the report included:

"Egypt: 'the human rights situation continued to deteriorate in 1993 as a result of actions by terrorist groups, the government and non-violent Islamic activists.'"

The report said the government "perpetrated many abuses," including arbitrary arrests, torture, and harassment of journalists.

Saudi Arabia: Principle human rights problems cited included torture, incommunicado detention, free speech restrictions, and "systemic discrimination against women and ethnic and religious minorities."

The report noted that the Saudis' oil wealth has helped improve the quality of life for most citizens, as well as en-

riching members of the royal family and their associates.

Kuwait: Some progress was noted in the treatment of minorities and foreigners working in Kuwait but the report added, "nevertheless, serious human rights problems remain," including arbitrary arrest and torture.

The report said some human rights groups had been effectively banned from the country and Iraqis, Palestinians and stateless workers with strong family ties in Kuwait have been refused readmittance since the Gulf war.

Syria: The report noted the release of some political prisoners, loosened exit permits for Syrian Jews, and the holding of trials for long-time detainees, said "there was no basic change in the human rights situation in 1993."

It cited reports of arbitrary arrest, torture, speech restrictions and the denial of the right of citizens to change their government, adding, "Syrian government resistance to human rights monitoring makes it dif-

(Continued on page 3)

'Israel may have executed detainees'

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The United States charged Tuesday there were credible reports that Israeli security forces had mistreated Palestinian detainees and in some cases tortured them or engaged in summary executions.

In its annual human rights report, the department said what it called credible sources reported that Israeli undercover units disguised as Palestinians killed 27 Palestinians of late November 1993, down from a reported 45 in 1992.

While Israeli officials acknowledge using undercover agents and say all reported abuses by the Israeli security forces are investigated, the U.S. report said "these investigations rarely result in imposition of serious punishment."

But the report also praised Israel's democratic system and said that last year Israel scaled back its practice of blowing up the homes of Palestinians it accuses of "terrorism" and resorted less frequently to curfews in the West Bank.



Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. panel overseeing the elimination of Iraq's weapons programme, speaks to reporters in Baghdad upon his arrival there Wednesday (AFP photo)

Ghali wants Iraq to reopen talks on one-time oil sale

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Secretary-General Boutros Ghali on Tuesday urged Iraq to resume negotiations for the sale of \$1.6 billion worth of oil, saying agreement would "create a new atmosphere of confidence."

Dr. Ghali told a news conference that he was ready to reopen negotiations immediately if Iraq wanted to do so. The Baghdad government abruptly broke off negotiations last August, saying it preferred to press for the total lifting of the oil embargo, not a limited, one-time oil sale.

The proceeds would be used to purchase humanitarian supplies for Iraq, pay some post-Gulf war U.N. costs in Iraq, and contribute to a compensation fund for victims of the Gulf war.

"We are ready if they (the Iraqis) want to begin again," Dr. Ghali said in answer to a question. "We believe it is in their interest and there is no incompatibility between partial lifting of the oil embargo and the total lifting," he said.

Agreement on a limited oil sale, he said, "would create a new atmosphere of confidence between the United Nations and Iraq, between the Security Council and Iraq."

He also said he was willing to renegotiate conditions for the limited sale, but emphasized that the Security Council would have to approve any agreement between Iraq and the U.N. secretariat.

Iraq has complained the terms are onerous and violate its sovereignty. It says the amount of \$1.6 billion is far too low.

Iraq would receive only about one-third of the amount for

purchase of humanitarian supplies and distribution would be supervised by the United Nations.

Under the 1991 Gulf war ceasefire resolution, the oil embargo will be lifted when Iraq meets conditions relating to the destruction of prohibited weapons of mass destruction and long-term monitoring of its arms programmes.

The United States, however, wants Iraq first to fulfill other ceasefire terms, such as recognition of the border with Kuwait, an end to "repression" of its people.

In Bahrain, a U.N. official said Iraq had to prove it accepts long-term monitoring of its weapons programme before any lifting of the oil embargo.

Rolf Ekeus, the Swedish head of the U.N. commission charged with dismantling post-war Iraq, told reporters on the eve of a four-day mission to Baghdad that he was still seeking information on Iraq's chemical weapons.

"It is not enough for Iraq to say 'we accept Resolution 715,' but it must show in deeds that it is complying with 715," he said at the commission's base in Manama.

In November, Iraq accepted the Security Council resolution calling for long-term monitoring and has since pressed for authorisation from the United Nations to resume its oil exports.

Mr. Ekeus said his mission in Baghdad would be "to set up a political framework for the talks and especially to focus on the process towards lifting of the oil embargo."

He declined to set a time-frame for the complex system

of long-term monitoring to be put in place, after which his commission would report to the Security Council that Iraq was complying with the resolution.

"It is very important for instance to ascertain whether the system functions or not," he said. "We cannot provide a time-frame and promise at the end of this time everything will be fine."

Charles Duelfer, his assistant, said last week at the end of a mission to prepare for the Ekeus visit that his talks in Baghdad had been "very productive."

But Mr. Ekeus pointed out: "We are still expecting in coming days information on past chemical production, where we are still not fully satisfied."

He was to travel to Baghdad Wednesday with the deputy director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Maurizio Zaffaroni. On Sunday, Mr. Ekeus was to visit Kuwait to assess "the Kuwaiti perspective."

A U.N. team of chemical experts arrived in the Iraqi capital on Tuesday for a two-week inspection linked to the efforts to set up long-term monitoring.

"The aim of our mission is to identify and to lift that means to seal, special chemical production equipment which was procured by the Iraqi chemical warfare programme in the past," said Horst Reeps, leader of the 11-member team.

In December, another U.N. arms expert, Cees Wolterbeek, said that Iraq's arsenal of chemical weapons had almost been dismantled and that the rest would also be destroyed.

He declined to set a time-frame for the complex system

U.N. braces for massive famine Sudan

By David Chazan
Agence France Presse

NAIROBI — The United Nations has appealed for funds to launch a huge relief operation to feed millions of drought victims driven from their homes or trapped by new fighting in southern Sudan's civil war.

The U.N.'s Nairobi-based Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) said it was bracing for "a major crisis, possibly the worst in southern Sudan since OLS began in 1989 in response to a famine which killed 250,000 people."

The latest hostilities in the decade-long war between southern rebels and forces of the northern-dominated government erupted last month near Sudan's southern border with Uganda.

The fighting has since intensified, and private relief workers have reported more than 10,000 government soldiers marching southwards in two columns as Khartoum's annual dry-season offensive gathers momentum.

The OLS said it was stocking 2,000 tonnes of food and emergency supplies in Lokichokio, a northern Kenyan aid base near the Sudanese border, to cope with a possible "mass displacement of civilians living in the war zone."

"At least two million people in the south have had a bad harvest and are now dependent on food assistance," said Philip O'Brien, OLS coordinator and operational chief of the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Some 2.3 million people living in the south and another 1.8 million displaced people in the north urgently need shelter, health care and other

forms of assistance, OLS said. "Funds are urgently needed," OLS said in a statement Tuesday. The agency said UNICEF was finalising an appeal to finance expanded relief efforts.

But the recent upsurge in fighting has complicated food and medical airlifts to the vast, undeveloped south, a region of swamp and savannah twice the size of France that has only a few hundred kilometres of paved roads, relief workers said.

Flights to several destinations have been suspended, they said. Hundreds of thousands of refugees have poured into Uganda.

"The purpose of the government's two-pronged advance seems to be to cut off the rebels' supply lines from Uganda, and to resupply government troops in western equatoria," said a private relief official.

"It's a very, large-scale offensive," said the official, who requested anonymity.

Khartoum, however, has denied that its forces are advancing southwards and has accused the rebels of attacking the Toposa tribe near the Kenyan border.

Attempts to restart stalled peace talks between the two rival factions of the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the government collapsed last month as Khartoum rejected a rebel proposal to hold a referendum on southern secession.

The current fighting between the mainstream SPLA faction led by John Garang and government forces seems not to have involved the rival SPLA-United splinter group headed by Reik Mashar.

The two factions agreed a common agenda for proposed peace talks after Garang dropped his opposition to a referendum on self-determination during talks in Nairobi mediated by Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda.

Reuter adds: Washington's ambassador to Khartoum warned Tuesday of a huge human tragedy in Sudan if the threatened dry-season offensive by rearm government forces against southern rebels goes ahead.

"The consequences to the people in the area would be devastating," Ambassador Donald Petersen told Reuters Television in an interview.

"Right now, the Khartoum government has prepared for a military offensive, whether it will go forward with that offensive is not yet certain. We hope it doesn't," he added.

Mr. Petersen stressed the United States had "no leverage" with Sudan's strongly Muslim fundamentalist-influenced government which it has branded as a supporter of "terrorism."

"We can only try and convince them that they should do the right thing for the people of Sudan so that we can have a better relationship," he said.

Nan Borton, director of the U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance, said fresh fighting would cause untold misery to a population already in danger of extinction.

"It's fair to say we are looking at a situation worse than the last couple of years," she told Reuters.

At least 250,000 people died in southern Sudan in 1988. Aid workers say the situation is as bad now as it was then.

Egypt, Turkey urge end to Bosnia embargo

ANKARA (Agencies) — The president of Turkey and Egypt called Tuesday for the lifting of the arms embargo on Bosnia.

"It is necessary for the arms embargo against Bosnia to be lifted if the attacks (against Bosnian Muslims) continue," Turkey's Suleyman Demirel and Egypt's Hosni Mubarak said in a joint statement after holding talks in Ankara.

"They called for efforts to meet 'necessary minimum conditions for the creation of a livable Bosnian state' and lasting peace in the Balkans," Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller and Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto were due to visit Bosnia on Wednesday for talks with Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic.

Turkey and Egypt are members of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) that has long voiced anger at what it sees as the West's failure to

support co-religionists in Bosnia. Muslim states have supported air strikes against Serb forces, but none has officially extended military aid to Bosnian Muslims.

Mr. Mubarak left Turkey on Tuesday evening after his one-day visit.

Mr. Mubarak and Mr. Demirel pledged support for Middle-East peace, saying "the historic chance for peace should not be missed."

Mr. Demirel, praising Egypt's role in the process, said there was much Turkey and Egypt could do economically and politically within the region.

"Turkey and Egypt constitute an element of balance and stability in the Middle East," he said.

"We hope to progress from the already healthy relations between our two leading coun-

tries in the Islamic World, to work for stronger regional and bilateral relations," Mr. Mubarak told reporters before his talks with Mr. Demirel.

Mr. Mubarak and Mr. Demirel also reiterated their backing for Iraq's territorial integrity, and said the suffering should be eased for the Iraqi people, under a trade embargo since the end of the 1991 Gulf war sparked by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Turkey and Egypt have both suffered huge economic losses from the embargo on Iraq, formerly their leading trade partner.

Ms. Ciller said after meeting Mr. Mubarak that they had discussed cooperation on rebuilding the Middle East.

Mr. Mubarak was accompanied by his information, foreign defence, economy, foreign trade and electricity ministers.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Law aims to curb Shin Bet torture

TEL AVIV (R) — Israel's Shin Bet secret service, accused by Palestinians of routinely torturing prisoners, will be subject to independent government scrutiny for the first time under a law passed Tuesday. Dedi Zucker, chairman of the parliamentary laws committee, said the law passed by parliament would enable the state's attorney to investigate complaints of improper action by secret police previously probed by the Shin Bet itself. "It would not let the secret services hide behind a curtain...that should not be used to hide things which are illegal," Mr. Zucker told Reuters. Sponsors of the bill hope it will have a chilling effect on torture during Shin Bet interrogations of Arab prisoners. The law passed unanimously with support from both Israeli leftists and rightists. Mr. Zucker said state prosecutors would be able to investigate "major complaints" while they may relegate to police what he called minor complaints. Human rights groups say Palestinian prisoners are routinely tortured during interrogation by the Shin Bet which makes use of a 1987 commission of inquiry report enabling it to use "moderate physical pressure." Palestinian prisoners have died during Shin Bet interrogations, provoking international condemnation.

Iranian troops kill six in clash

NICOSIA (AP) — Iranian troops have killed six people and wounded 10 in a surprise ambush on drug dealers running motorcycle convoys in the southeast of the country, Tehran Radio reported Tuesday. Thirty motorcycles, five other vehicles and 40 weapons were captured in the gun battle, which lasted several hours near Andujer in Kerman province, about 800 kilometres southeast Tehran, the radio report said. It reported, said 241 kilograms of drugs were also seized. It was not clear from the reported report which drugs they were. Iran is waging a war on narcotics which it says is aimed at severing smuggling routes from Asia to Europe. Iran maintains that domestic production has been wiped out. On Jan. 24, Iranian media reported that a 10-day campaign had resulted in the seizure of 2,170 kilograms of narcotics around Shiraz in the south and the arrest of 454 smugglers.

Iran subs not immediate threat — France

DUBAI (AP) — Iran's recent acquisition of two new Russian submarines does not pose an immediate threat to Gulf security, a French naval commander said Tuesday. "It would take Iran anywhere between 5 to 10 years merely to train personnel and have the back-up to operate such a specialised category of warships," said Vice Admiral Hubert Foillard, commander in chief of the French maritime forces in the Indian Ocean. However, Mr. Foillard acknowledged in an interview here that inclusion of the two kilo-class submarines in the Iranian navy was "an enhancement of submarine capabilities of the Iranian naval forces." Adm. Foillard, a former submarine commander, spoke during a five day stopover in Dubai's Port Rashid of his warship, the 18,000-tonnes Var. He expressed satisfaction that Iran's dispute with the United Arab Emirates over the Gulf Island of Abu Musa and the Greater and Lesser Tunbs was being taken up by the Arab League and the Gulf Cooperation Council.

Sri Lankan maid dies in fall from balcony

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — A young Sri Lankan maid has died in a fall from the fifth-floor balcony of an apartment block, apparently trying to escape from her Kuwaiti employers, the Sri Lankan embassy said here Tuesday. An embassy spokesman said Ralanayake Mudiyanselage, 26, a mother of four children, died last Friday after working one month for a Kuwaiti employee of the royal court. Residents of her apartment block told AFP that the woman "often cried and complained" that she was badly treated by her employers. The embassy ruled out suicide or murder but said an investigation was underway to determine the exact cause of death and whether she had been physically abused. Last July, a Kuwaiti and his Lebanese wife were sentenced to seven years in jail for having beaten to death their Filipina maid. The authorities have since April 1992 repatriated around 1,000 Asian domestic workers from Asia since the 1991 Gulf war which ended the seven-month Iraqi occupation.

Egyptian police kill seven in Cairo

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian police shot dead seven Islamic militants on Tuesday evening in a shootout which began when police raided the militants in northeast Cairo. An Interior Ministry statement Wednesday said the militants, described as "terrorists," opened fire first and the state security police fired back straight away. "This resulted in the death of seven militants who were inside the hideout. Large quantities of arms and ammunition were also found," it added. The statement did not mention any police casualties. The raid was in the suburb of Al Zayya Al Hamra. Militants have been fighting the Egyptian security forces for almost two years. More than 280 people have been killed in the violence, most of them either policemen or members of the militant organisations.

Israel to give tags to Israeli Arabs

TEL AVIV (AP) — Parliament security was ordered to stop its practice of issuing separate entry passes to Israeli Arab visitors to set them apart from Jews, a legislator confirmed Wednesday. Israeli Arabs, in theory full citizens of the state, were apparently considered a special risk by parliament's Security officers, said lawmaker Kan Cohen who accidentally found out about the decades-old practice Tuesday. "This was an ugly thing, part of the old discrimination between Jews and Arabs," Mr. Cohen said. "The Knesset (parliament) is the house of democracy where every Israeli has to be equal." Mr. Cohen said that after he learned that the entry passes for Israeli Arabs were marked with three "A" symbols, he informed Speaker Shevach Weiss who ordered the practice stopped.

With fruits of peace rotting on vine, Gazans are sceptical

By Neil Macfarquhar
The Associated Press

DEIR AL BALAH, occupied Gaza Strip — The fruits of peace are starting to rot on the vine.

Gaza's tomato farmers, convinced that autonomy would be in place by now and they could export directly to Europe, planted a bumper crop three months ago. But with Israeli occupation rules still blocking such trade, they have few buyers.

"When we heard the word peace we thought it would happen tomorrow," said Talal Abu Safa, a 40-year-old farmer who increased his tomato greenhouses from 10 to 15 this year. "Now sometimes I think we will have to suffer through these delays for the next 10 years."

The blight is spreading beyond the tomatoes, infecting Gazans with a tendency to curse the peace process for its slow pace even though Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres established a warm working relationship over the weekend that holds promise for wrapping it up eventually.

Palestinians want change in their daily lives. They want the thousands of Palestinians in Israeli jails released, Israeli troops off their streets and an end to random identification checks.

Most of all, they want the economic development and jobs being used to sell the agreement. Merchants anticipating huge, celebratory sales with the start of with-

drawn last December are stuck with massive stocks because of the delays. Land prices continue upwards but sales are stagnating as caution sets in.

"As long as we have nothing, nothing is moving," said Professor Samir Hazboun, one of the negotiators at the Paris economic talks.

"Given the scope of the change demanded, some accept the idea that breakthroughs on the nitty-gritty of autonomy take time."

"It's like a supermarket without fixed prices. The bargaining goes back and forth," said electronics shop owner Yousef Dia Zada, 47. "But people understand that at the end they will get something."

While the talks continue, Gazans accuse Israel of deliberately making their lives

harder.

"It is the part of the negotiations. They want the Palestinians to be eager to accept any deal," said Emad Sharif, a professor who had his permit to travel to Birzeit University in the West Bank lifted last week for the first time since he returned from Stanford University a decade ago.

The Federation of Trade Unions planned to start a hunger strike Tuesday to protest what they say is up to 2,000 workers who have had their permits to work in Israel confiscated over the past 10 days.

Captain Hanne Jeshurun, spokeswoman for the military government in Gaza, said Dr. Sharif would get his permit restored and the other confiscations, which she said numbered in the 100s, were under review. Israel slashed the num-

ber of permits from about 80,000 to over 20,000 after a series of attacks inside Israel last spring.

Gazans see this as harassment that should have stopped with the peace process, and Mr. Arafat's reputation is taking a beating.

"Arafat is taking all our problems to hell with him, just so he can be governor over Gaza and Jericho in the end," said Ismail Hanih, an administrator at Gaza City's Islamic University close to the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas).

Mr. Arafat's Fateh group lost its majority in the Gaza Engineers Association over the weekend and cells within the underground Fateh Hawks movement continue to shoot at Israeli targets.

Gazans point to the reasons

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION
Tel: 77311-19

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30	Taratan
19:00	News in French
19:15	Rencontre
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:00	News in Arabic
21:30	Flash and Blood
22:00	...
22:30	...

Bas...
11:25...
14:35...
17:13...
18:33...

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swediff.
Tel. 510740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775361.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church Tel. 652526.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 841495.

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

Temperatures will rise gradually with winds becoming northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY	
Police	192
Fire Brigade	192
Rescue Police	192
Highway Police	192
Traffic Police	192
Public Security Department	192
Hotel Complaints	192
Water and Sewerage	192
Complaints	192
Amman Municipality	192
Complaints	192
Telephone Information	192
Directorate assistance	192
Overseas Calls	192
Central Amman Telephone	192
Repairs	192
Abdali Telephone Repairs	192
Jordan Television	192
Radios Jordan	192
Water Authority	192
Jordan Electricity Authority	192
Electric Power	192
Company	192
Flight Information	192
Queen Alia Int. Airport	192

EMERGENCIES

Civil Defence Department	661111
Rescue	630341
Civil Defence Emergency	199
Fire Brigade	192
Highway Police	643402
Traffic Police	643402
Public Security Department	630321
Hotel Complaints	605800
Water and Sewerage	661176
Complaints	897467
Amman Municipality	787111
Complaints	787111
Telephone Information	121
Directorate assistance	101030
Overseas Calls	121
Central Amman Telephone	121
Repairs	623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs	661101
Jordan Television	773111
Radios Jordan	774111
Water Authority	840100
Jordan Electricity Authority	815615
Electric Power	815615
Company	636381
Flight Information	1853200
Queen Alia Int. Airport	08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:	
Hussein Medical Centre	813813/2
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn	642316
Al-Khalid Maternity, J. Amn	642412
Jabal Amman Maternity	642362
Malhas, J. Amman	636140
Palestine, Shmeisani	6641714
Shmeisani Hospital	669131
University Hospital	645845
Al-Muscher Hospital	6672779
The Islamic, Abdali	66612737
Al-Ahli, Abdali	6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen	771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafich	775111/26
Army, Marika	891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital	602240/50
Amal Hospital	674155
ZARQA:	
Zarqa Govt. Hospital	(09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital	(09)900560
Ibn Sina Hospital	(09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital	(09)777920
IRBID:	
Prince Basmal Hospital	(02)225355
Great Catholic Hospital	(02)22775
Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital	(02)247194
AQABA:	
Princess Haya Hospital	(03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. 108532005, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:00	Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
06:10	Aden (RJ)
07:00	Sana'a (RJ)
09:25	Aqaba (RJ)
09:30	Aqaba (RJ)
09:35	Riyadh (RJ)
09:36	New Delhi (RJ)
10:00	Beirut (RJ)
10:30	Colombo (RJ)
17:00	Larnaca (RJ)
18:05	Abu Dhabi (RJ)
18:30	London, Berlin (RJ)
19:00	Athens (RJ)
19:05	Catania, Tunis (RJ)
19:08	Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
20:00	Rome (RJ)
23:45	Cairo (RJ)

Princess Basma reviews family welfare with visiting U.N. population fund official

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Wednesday received Mehri Hikmat, chief of the Division for Arab States and Europe of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), at the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development (QAF).

During the visit, Dr. Hikmat, who was accompanied by Derwas Alkhas, the representative of UNFPA in Jordan, discussed the population situation in Jordan and was briefed on the progress of the National Population Commission (NPC) whose secretariat is hosted at QAF.

Dr. Hikmat congratulated both the NPC and Queen Alia Fund for their efforts in improving family welfare, which she said, depends greatly on the education and health levels of women as well as their involvement in community life.

He added that women in Jordan are privileged in having support from the government and especially privileged to have the support of Princess Basma. "Women are ready to



Her Royal Highness Princess Basma Wednesday confers with Mehri Hikmat, chief of the Division for Arab States and Europe of the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) and the accompanying delegation (Petra photo)

do the work (of improving their lives). When they get support from the highest level, then part of the work is already done for them," she said.

UNFPA supports local population programmes including the National Population Strategy and Policy which is being prepared by the NPC

to increase awareness about population issues and formulate a national plan for improving the welfare of families.

Princess Basma also Wednesday received Renata Bati, head of the Delegation of the Commission of the European Union in Jordan (EU) to discuss further coop-

eration between QAF and the EU on development projects that benefit needy families in various urban, rural and bedouin areas.

QAF has a network of over 40 community development centres through which different projects and programmes are implemented.

Chinese trade team visits Zarqa free zone

By Ian Attalla
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The China Council for the Promotion of International Trade (CCPIT) business delegation Wednesday visited the Zarqa Chamber of Commerce where they met with the chamber President Ibrahim Taqi Eddin and chamber members, and later toured the free trade zone located near Zarqa.

Mr. Taqi Eddin said in a short press briefing that the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce (FJCC) had two main aims in regard to the Chinese visit. The first and most important goal, he said, was to adjust the present trade balance between the two countries.

"We export to China at present a mere 25 per cent of what we import from it," he commented.

The second major goal was for the FJCC to improve the information base available to Jordanian merchants on any and all potential commercial opportunities and outlets in China.

"We have specially requested this from the commercial attaché at the Chinese embassy. This is not a declared goal of the FJCC, but it is an important one."

Mr. Taqi Eddin said that at present no joint ventures of any sort had been conducted between the two sides in Zarqa, nor were any under discussion as of yet, but he saw a positive indication in that it was the Chinese themselves



Ibrahim Taqi Eddin, president of the Zarqa Chamber of Commerce, Wednesday briefs a visiting delegation from the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade at the Zarqa free trade zone

who had requested to visit Zarqa's free trade zone.

During the meeting at the Zarqa chamber, Ye Bing, leader of the CCPIT delegation which arrived in Jordan Tuesday said the main purpose of the group's trip was to locate any Jordanian products which would be price competitive in China's domestic markets and to explore possible new opportunities for investment and joint ventures in Jordan.

Although China was definitely interested in what Jordan might have to offer commercially, he said, a major obstacle was currently present in the vast physical distance

which separates the two nations and the lack of direct maritime routes between them, which "can cause cargo shipping to take up to two months."

But nevertheless, he said, Sino-Jordanian trade relations had developed dramatically since 1990, with the Chinese investing since then in some 74 engineering projects inside Jordan worth altogether \$270 million. He said that China had also provided Jordan with some \$50 million in aid in 1992.

He added that China as well as Jordan hoped to diversify the present portfolio of trade between the two countries and

attempt to equalise the current trade balance.

Some chamber members present in the meeting expressed interest in possibly importing Chinese-made cars and other vehicles.

Mr. Bing answered that although China was currently producing five different lines of cars and other types of vehicles, including joint ventures with German, French and U.S. manufacturers, the present strong needs of China's domestic markets for additional vehicular transportation was such that it precluded any sizeable exporting of these vehicles for at least the next five years.

12-year-old Zarqa boy accidentally electrocuted

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A 12-year-old Zarqa boy died Tuesday of electrocution, police reports said.

Fadi Ahmad was playing outside his house when he leaned on an electricity pole nearby and was electrocuted, the boy's father told police.

Mr. Ahmad said he noticed that something was wrong when he saw his son fall to

the ground after leaning on the pole.

The child was rushed to Zarqa Military Hospital where he died later of electric shock, said hospital sources.

Police investigations attributed the fatal accident to a short circuit in the pole.

Meanwhile, in a separate incident, a 33-year-old man reported to police Tuesday that someone had intentionally set his car on fire.

The victim, identified as

Meanawer A. Meanawer, told police he was in his house when a neighbour came to inform him that his car was on fire.

Mr. Meanawer said he rushed to his car and was able to extinguish the fire with the help of his neighbours.

Preliminary investigations by police indicate that the perpetrators managed to open one of the car lit the doors, poured a petroleum liquid,

inside the car flammable material and left the scene.

Police found an empty plastic can nearby containing some petroleum liquid and a match inside the car.

The victim told police he does not suspect anyone, but said he will press charges if someone is arrested.

Police reports, however, made no mention of the area where the incident occurred, or if the car was fully insured.

'Human rights deteriorating'

(Continued from page 1)

difficult to know precisely the details and numbers of such abuses."

Libya: Most rights "remain tightly restricted," the report said, citing a list of general abuses. It added, however, that since the United States has no embassy in Libya and access to information is limited, "it is difficult to comment authoritatively on conditions in Libya."

Jordan: The country continued to show progress in liberalising its political system, but there are continuing human rights problems connected with broad police powers, the report said.

Morocco: The government took several steps in 1993 to address human rights concern, including the appointment of a deputy minister of human rights, but "closer scrutiny... reveals many of these steps to be cosmetic." The report cited routine abuse of prisoners and said at least three deaths last year "can reasonably be attributed to torture."

The United Arab Emirates: "The principal problems continue to be denial of the right of citizens to change their government, incommunicado detention, and restrictions on the freedoms of speech, press, assembly, association and worker rights."

Algeria: After deteriorating severely in 1992, human rights conditions deteriorated even further in 1993, with the postponement of elections and the extension of a government-declared state of emergency, the report said. There were reports of security forces engaging in torture. The Muslim opposition "also committed human rights abuses on a large scale, waging a campaign of terrorism."

Iraq: "Systematic violations of human rights continued in virtually all categories in 1993."

Iran: "As in the past, the government went to considerable lengths to conceal its abuses and continued to obstruct the activities of international human rights monitors." There was no evidence of improvement, the report said.



THE GIFT OF SIGHT: His Royal Highness Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid Wednesday honours relatives of deceased persons who donated their corneas to Jordan's Eye Bank.

Food stocks ready for Ramadan — minister

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Supply Radi Ibrahim Wednesday said Jordan's food supply stocks, including olive oil and frozen poultry will meet local market needs during the fasting month of Ramadan due to begin Feb. 12.

Addressing a meeting of Supply Department directors, the minister urged a tightening of controls over food prices and quality.

It was agreed at the meeting that butchers will be divided into three categories: those that sell locally produced meat; those selling frozen meat; and those offering fresh imported meat.

Iraq to rely on Aqaba after sanctions

AMMAN — Jordan Wednesday said Iraq would continue to rely heavily on the Red Sea port of Aqaba after sanctions end because its own ports could not handle the demand.

"Iraq's dependence on the port of Aqaba in the event of the lifting of sanctions will be primary because neither their port of Um Qasr nor even Mersin Port would be enough to handle all their goods," Jordan's Transport Minister Aqel Halasa told Reuters.

Jordanian concerns rose last November when Iraq began importing through Um Qasr and said whenever possible it would directly import U.N.-permitted goods — mostly food and medicine.

"Whatever the size of Um Qasr, and it's a large port, the

anticipated rise in Iraq's import needs would make them need not just Aqaba but other ports," said the minister.

Mr. Halasa said use of Um Qasr, Iraq's only port, would not affect Aqaba as "it would continue to be more economical for Iraq to import its European cargo through it." Um Qasr would be used mainly for imports from the Far East.

He expected activity in Aqaba to surge when sanctions end. Less than 100 trailers travel the Aqaba-Baghdad route daily against 400 before the Gulf crisis.

Mr. Halasa said upgrading and modernisation of Aqaba was underway to handle "the expected large volume of demand."

Sanctions were imposed be-

cause of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Aqaba has also suffered from the U.N. inspection of Aqaba-bound ships for goods that could violate the sanctions.

Port activity has fallen from pre-Gulf war level peaks of 20 million tonnes annually to around 13 million tonnes in 1993.

In an indication of confidence, Mr. Halasa said the Iraq-Jordan Land Transport Company decided in Baghdad last week to buy 100 Renault trucks to modernise its 420 trailer fleet.

The firm, set up in 1981 as a 50-50 joint venture between the two states, is registered as a Jordanian company and is not subject to aspects of the U.N. embargo imposed on Iraq.

JORDAN WELFARE LOTTERY

Issue No. 2/1994

Drawing of February 2, 1994

Winning Tickets

Holder of ticket No. 38986 A Wins JD 40,000	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 3,800 each wins JD 380
Holder of ticket No. 38986 B Wins JD 10,000	Ten consolation prizes totalling JD 1,800 each wins JD 180
Holder of ticket No. 35504 A B Wins JD 5,000	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 1,400 each wins JD 90
Holder of ticket No. 21297 A B Wins JD 3,500	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 1,300 each wins JD 75
Holder of ticket No. 24514 A B Wins JD 3,000	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 1,000 each wins JD 50
Holder of ticket No. 24866 A B Wins JD 2,500	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 900 each wins JD 45
Holder of ticket No. 12895 A B Wins JD 1,500	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 600 each wins JD 30
Holder of ticket No. 32559 A B Wins JD 1,000	Twenty consolation prizes totalling JD 300 each wins JD 15
Holder of ticket No. 12297 A B Wins JD 800	

Ticket numbers	60470 24775 A B	Win JD 300 each
Ticket numbers	44891 42093 A B	Win JD 150 each

TICKETS ENDING WITH

5798 0663 A B	Win JD 90 each	1063 9470 A B	Win JD 40 each
238 A B	Win JD 15 each	67 A B	Win JD 5 each
2 TWO A B	Win JD 3 each		

COVER PRIZES FOR THE LOTTERY SELLERS

48 covers, attached to the stub of 10 ending in	791 828 620 056 A B	Win JD 10
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Winners of the grand prizes in the special issue number 1/1994 of January 17, 1994

Sadeq Saleh Amman-Restaurant Half second A JD6,000	Ahmed Abdul Rahman Amman-Worker Half second A JD6,000	Majid Abdul Aziz Amman-Worker Half third B JD3,000	Hassan Abdul Hal Amman-Employee Half third B JD3,000	Salam Madouh Karak-Jeweller Half third A JD2,500	Al Sayed Abduls Javed Amman-Worker Half first A JD5,500	Othman Khazishishah Zarqa-Worker Half first B JD1,000
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Next Draw takes place on February 17, 1994
First biggest prizes are issued from GUVS headquarters

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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation
Established 1975

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Beneath surface of rights

THE U.S. State Department's 1993 annual report on human rights confirmed what the Arab side has been saying all along: Israel continues to mistreat and torture Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The report also confirmed to the unsuspecting world that Israeli undercover units, disguised as Palestinians, practised extrajudicial killings on a scale, reminiscent of the most oppressive nations of the world. The only positive thing Washington had to say about Israel was the diminishing rate of demolition of houses belonging to Palestinians suspected of participating in the armed struggle against the Jewish state and the beginning of a "trend" to release Palestinian prisoners.

Unfortunately, the U.S. report on Israel's human rights profile for 1993 touched only upon the outward manifestations of Israeli human rights violations. Other human rights dimensions were left unexplored, such as the civil and political rights of the Palestinians under occupation. The report, for example, did not elaborate at all about Israel's treaty obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) which it had ratified in 1992, especially with regard to the Arab minority within Israel proper and the Palestinians living under Israeli occupation.

It so happens that the ICCPR dictated clearcut obligations on Israel to stop discrimination between Israeli citizens by according all minorities there equal treatment. As for the Palestinians residing in the occupied territories, the ICCPR calls for according them all the civil and political rights mentioned in it. Had Israel been faithful to the various human rights conventions it has acceded to, it would have facilitated the process of according all peoples under its jurisdiction, especially in the occupied territories, full civil and political rights on top of which is of course the right to self-determination.

The list of the other civil and political rights that Israel has systematically denied the Palestinians in the occupied areas and the Arab Palestinians who possess Israeli citizenship is indeed long. The U.S. periodic report on Israel's human rights record should for a change touch upon these additional concerns.

The United Nations Commission on Human Rights has just convened in Geneva to discuss the human rights situation in many countries. It would be fitting to complete the unfinished job of Washington on the global human rights situation by digging deeper into the roots of these violations and to start dealing with the other fundamental human rights aspects yet untouched by current international efforts to protect and promote freedoms in the world at large.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL DUSTOUR daily discussed the allegations made by the health minister about the food and drug situation in the Kingdom, urging Parliament to take a decision Wednesday that would help the government more than a week ago should also be in a position to give a hand to the government in this regard, said the paper. Noting with satisfaction a government decision to present Parliament with a full and detailed report about the situation following in-depth investigations in the allegations, the paper said that such a statement and a decision by parliament would help end public concern about the food and drug situation which has been on the mind of many people for the past weeks. It is doubtless that the members of Parliament will listen carefully to the government's reports on this question and will take the appropriate decision, said the daily. The paper said that the government and Parliament are expected to put matters in their right perspective and offer the public satisfactory answers to the numerous questions revolving about the minister's allegations.

A COLUMBIANIST in Al Ra'i daily criticised the European Council for nominating Yitzhak Rabin to receive the Nobel peace prize and UNESCO for granting Mr. Rabin a similar honour. Mahmoud Rimawi said that Mr. Rabin is being rewarded for maintaining Israel's occupation of Arab land by the Europeans who are deceived by Israel's false agreements at Oslo and Davos which will never be implemented. The Europeans have not yet asked Mr. Rabin to announce Israel's commitment to withdraw from the occupied Arab lands, as they realise that he would not do so, and yet they have decided to grant him an important award, continued the writer. He said that the Europeans realise too that Israel is currently exploiting the negotiations with the Palestinians to make further gains for the Jewish state and win further prestige for his government and ensure approval for his occupation of Arab land.

We must 'strive, seek, find and not yield'

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

THE recent controversy over the Minister of Health's remarks, regardless of the specific nature of the problems involved and of what the exact truth may turn out to be, boils down, in my own mind at least, to two interconnected social matters: commitment and leadership.

Most of the comments I have heard or read on the said remarks seem to miss the heart of the matter by a long shot. Let's put aside the question of tonality and phraseology, even though we understand that a person who speaks with a diplomatic tone of voice and who chooses his diction wisely is ultimately more persuasive and effective than one who does not (except that one cannot but raise one's voice at times and be deliberately provocative in order to be heard); let's, also, not ponder much on why the minister opts to bring the case to the media instead of handling it himself firmly and silently, even though we realise that issues which are brought to the media will perhaps be taken more seriously than those which are not and even though we know from observation and experience that perhaps a cabinet minister cannot correct many of the mistakes alone even in a ministry in which he is the boss (there may well be too many powerful cliques, lobbies, and alliances); let's, further, not worry too much about the minister's motives or intentions for, in the end, we can judge people on the basis of what they do or do not do, not on the basis of what they claim or say; and let's, moreover, cut down on sentimental, patriotic rhetoric, even though we are able to imagine the negative implications

such a matter may have on the image of the homeland which we all dearly love (true patriotism lies in deeds not words).

Let's instead focus on the spirit of the minister's message, which is (or ought to be) the real issue here. The way I see it, the question at hand is not merely about bad medicine, contaminated food, business tycoons corrupting poor government officials, etc. No! It is broader and larger, encompassing the very conduct and performance of our public institutions and establishments. I wish to raise two of its major aspects here.

The first has to do with the

appreciation of, what we do and naturally very little respect. Rules and laws can be very easily bent to accommodate our friends and relatives, as well as, our vicious, selfish little schemes. And if the concerned parties do not enforce the law strictly and fairly, the situation will be utterly chaotic.

It is in this particular context that I understand the following chilling anecdote which I heard a few years ago, through very reliable witnesses, involving a number of employees at the general laboratories at the Ministry of Health. Many of the food samples which were sent to the lab for the purpose of being tested, I was

they issued. What do we call such an act? Isn't it irresponsibility? Isn't it corruption? Isn't it a crime? God knows how many "untested" food items our children and we have consumed unsuspectingly?

Luckily, the Ministry of Health, which then (the incident happened in the mid 1980s) had and still has many clean, honest, God-fearing, country loving, and responsible officials, fired the said employees and replaced them with fresh university graduates who were given technical and moral training at the University of Science and Technology. Later, however, I heard that the said employees were rehired after pulling a few strings here and there.

The second aspect has to do with our experience with an expectations of leadership styles and conduct. Frankly speaking, most people (though, again, not all) occupying leadership positions in our society have not been up to the standards. By "leader," I mean any person who is entrusted with the task of spear-heading, overseeing, supervising, and assessing the work and performance of a number of other individuals. Unfortunately, there is either a misunderstanding or an abuse of many leadership positions. For many, such posts are seen either as a personal reward whose privileges are to be enjoyed and challenges and difficult tasks to be simply shunned, or a burden which ought to be met with the least trouble and effort. I was stunned a few years ago when a well-known university president said he gave priority in hiring to his relatives and secondly to people from his own town. He was dead serious. After all, his establishment is not a

national institution but his own father's property. It would be interesting to conduct a study on how many brothers and close cousins (who naturally form powerful cliques and lobbies) work side by side at our institutions; it would be even more interesting to dig into the criteria and means through which they were hired in the first place.

Ask the teachers in our public schools about the teacher who gets rewarded most either by the school or the ministry; definitely not the hardworking, creative, and imaginative teacher. No! It is either the "trouble-maker" or the "buddy" who keeps polishing up the head-

takes, and come to convince us that everything is OK. Their sole job is to try to prove to us that a dead-beat donkey is a sturdy horse.

Undeniably, the overall quality of life in Jordan is remarkably better than the quality of life in many Arab and third-world countries—hygienically, economically, socially, and politically. I am proud to belong to it. The gigantic steps it has taken in the few years since independence (especially) under its extremely competent leadership, have been quite admirable. At the same time, however, we must admit that our society is not heaven on

"We are used to administrative and academic leaders who take over a mediocre institution, one full of odd practices and mistakes, and come to convince us that everything is OK. Their sole job is to try to prove to us that a dead-beat donkey is a sturdy horse."

master's ego and who keeps in constant touch with relatives and connections in the directorates and ministries. Of course, favouritism is found worldwide, even in the most advanced countries, but not in the manner and degree we have in our society.

I do not know why the health minister said what he said. I do not know what kind of leader he is. But I know that his approach is a rare phenomenon, something we have not been much used to. This is why, in part, he upset so many. We are used to administrative and academic leaders who take over a mediocre institution, one full of odd practices and mis-

earth; it is neither ideal nor perfect. After all, we are a developing country. There are still many impediments, obstacles, and (yes) mistakes still obstructing our development and progress. Our job is to pinpoint, expose, discuss, argue and fight over, address, and find solutions to them, not bide our heads in the sand and pretend everything is fine with our world. In the absence of the effective role of the family, the school, and the university, our hopes are pinned almost entirely on our leaders in the various social spheres who ought, in the words of Ulysses, "to strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

For a big post-cold war conference with big ideas

By Flora Lewis

PARIS — French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe has called for a "new diplomatic initiative of all those (states) who can weigh" on the belligerents in ex-Yugoslavia. This should not be brushed off, as U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has done, saying that NATO just went through all the reviewing needed at its Brussels summit.

It is a recognition, which no other leader has had the candour to admit, of the enormous and rapidly expanding fiasco of western policy, or rather non-policy.

The one thing wrong with Mr. Juppe's appeal is that it does not go far enough. There are three policy vacuums demanding most urgent attention, at risk of what he rightly calls catastrophe. They are Bosnia and its neighbourhood, Russia and its ex-empire, and United Nations use of force.

They are all linked, and it is as idle to think that bite-by-bite solutions can be found in separate approaches as to think that access to Tuzla and Srebrenica will end Bosnia's war.

If a flagrant new example were needed of the mistakes made by nibbling at the edges of crisis instead of facing its strategic dimension, it comes in the new appeal by Eduard Shevardnadze, president of Georgia, for a United Nations peacekeeping force in his country.

Mr. Shevardnadze's glowing, confident demeanor when he was Soviet foreign minister negotiating the end of the cold war has been replaced by a look of haunted desperation. He sees his job as trying "to save my country," he told a press gathering in Paris, where he came to plead for help from France and U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali.

"We have no choice," he said when he was asked why he accepted Russian troops to put down the war in Abkhazia, after Russian troops created that threat to Georgia's survival in the first place.

There is a tiny force of some 20 U.N. observers in Georgia now, but he would like a peacekeeping force of 2,000. The U.N. situation is such that neither the men nor the money can be expected from the West.

Russia is ready, but this would mean Security Council endorsement of Russia's claim to prime responsibility for its former subject states. Recently, both President Boris Yel-



sin and Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev have taken up this line, echoing some of the extreme nationalism of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

It is a terrible idea. Mr. Ghali who is to make a report to the Security Council with recommendations, is aware of the dangers. But he is also aware that if the West won't do anything, it can hardly expect to keep the Russians out of wars in the "near abroad" and even further into Europe.

Georgia is only an example. It will set a precedent for several other trouble spots. As it is, U.N. operations are falling apart because there is no rational concordance between the missions and the political-military will. That is why so many generals have expressed their disgust, and quit or been fired.

Now comes Senator Robert Dole, a Republican with keen political antennae, arguing for so many restrictions on U.S. participation in U.N. force that he would in effect pull America out of its efforts to keep peace. Leaving what?

The French and the British are agonising about their frustrated, ineffective military presence in Bosnia. They see little point in staying, but they are afraid to pull out because of the bloody disaster they rightly foresee.

It has been evident since the start of the war in Yugoslavia nearly three years ago that it cannot be stopped without an overall settlement imposed from outside. Saying that the war must be stopped first and then be found is putting the cart before the horse. These

people see no reason to stop fighting until they have an answer to the question: What next? What would they have to expect?

Any durable settlement would have to encompass the whole of the Balkans, all of the old and new states, with mutual security guarantees and plans for region-wide economic development. A treaty-writing conference would have to be convened by "those who can weigh," as Mr. Juppe said — that is, Europe, the United States and Russia.

This would have been much easier to organise a year ago before Moscow's old ambitions were whetted anew by western dithering on security issues, most dramatically Yugoslavia, and western economic and political promises. The OECD has just published a dismaying statistic. In 1992, the net flow of all public and private money from all OECD countries to all the ex-communist countries was \$20 billion, a dribble. The same figure to developing countries in the same period was \$60 billion.

There is still time before the question of what's to be done has to be changed to the question of who lost Russia and the peace of Europe. But it is growing shorter. No sooner did President Bill Clinton fly home from Moscow than reform was shifted to low gear, and muted threats to neighbours stepped up. His smiles left no visible impact.

But Henry Kissinger's argument that it is wrong to try to include Russia in the search for a secure and stable Europe gives up all chance. He makes a peculiar distortion of why

NATO was founded in mocking Mr. Clinton's idea of not drawing new lines of antagonism. George Kennan's formula of containment, buttressing an already Soviet-enforced line against further expansion, was that the Soviet threat would eventually crumble on the far side. It did.

It is particularly odd to hear Mr. Kissinger, the real author of the "Sonnenfeld doctrine" encouraging East Central Europe to accept its Soviet overlords, rail now against Washington, which he claims is telling these same countries to "placate" Russia.

That isn't the case. But I agree with his conclusion, which does not flow from his current argument, that American policy must make clear that its support for reform includes the requirement that Russia embrace "the disciplines of a cooperative international system as well as its benefits."

All these needs must be tied together in a coherent western policy dealing with the Balkans, dealing with the United Nations' role, dealing with Russia, its real pains and its psychoses. If there were an adequate solution for each problem separately, we would have heard of it. Taken together, they can make a framework for peace on established international principles.

That means a big conference, with big ideas, to write a big post-cold war treaty. The Group of Seven industrial nations, with the addition of Russia, has the power to make it happen. They lack only the will — *International Herald Tribune*.

U.N. Compensation Commission starts work

THE GENEVA-based U.N. Compensation Commission, established to administer Iraqi reparations to victims of the invasion of Kuwait, at the end of December started considering the first claims. A severe shortage of funds, however, means that most claimants will have to wait.

The commission will start work with an initial batch — numbering about 560 — of the 5,000 claims submitted for death and personal physical injury. The hope is that payments can be made by spring 1994.

Commission officials concede, however, that funds are "very limited" and are sufficient only for administration and for the first batch of death and personal injury claims.

Compensation monies were to have come from frozen Iraqi assets and from one third of the revenues from any Iraqi oil sales. But the frozen assets are tiny compared to the commission's needs, and Iraqi oil sales

remain embargoed. In all, the commission has so far received 1,025,000 claims totalling well over \$10 billion. About one million of them have been lodged by expatriate workers forced to leave their jobs in Kuwait and Iraq. The final tally will almost certainly exceed \$100 billion.

Jeremy Carver, a senior partner at London solicitors Clifford Chance, which acts for the Kuwaitis in respect of reparations, stressed that although the present timetable calls for claims to be submitted until May 1, 1994, some types of damage — environmental degradation for example — need a long time to be assessed with any accuracy.

No realistic estimate of Kuwait's losses could therefore be made. What was certain, said Mr. Carver, was that the losses had been "very, very extensive" and that "some of them are going to be very difficult to measure."

LETTERS

For the sake of brotherly relations

To the Editor:

In the Feb. 2, 1994, issue your newspaper published an article concerning Jordanian-Iranian relations in which reference was made to the person of the ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Amman. This subject has aroused astonishment and deep regret.

While the Jordanian and Iranian leaderships are stressing the strong, cordial and brotherly relations between the Muslim nations of Jordan and Iran and the need to promote these relations, we ask why your paper should relay falsehoods and unfounded silly accusations that lack objectivity and credibility and that continue to emanate from a media linked to the American and Zionist circles, including the CNN network, which contribute to damaging the good relations between our two countries.

We express our astonishment at such behaviour, more than at the repetition of falsehoods and unfounded lies through your paper. We cannot find any interpretation for such a behaviour at a time when His Majesty King Hussein, replying to a provocative, sly question addressed to him by the CNN, wisdom that the Iranian ambassador in Jordan is behaving the way an ambassador should.

While strongly denying all that has been said about the ambassador, the embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran would like once again to underline the strong and firm relationship between our two countries, as charted by their respective leaderships, and would like to stress here that the publication of such reports and fabricated rumours propagated by an arrogant media would not serve the higher mutual interests.

The embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran hopes that your newspaper and the other papers will be more careful and should create confusion and damage to the relations between Jordan and Iran which have so far been characterised by affection and brotherly feelings.

The Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Amman.



The Lost Time — reflections on a generation's shattered dreams

By Mohammad Masharyah

Ever since the emergence of the Jordanian theatre movement in the 1960s, plays acted and performed in the country were all influenced by political ideology. It was in the wake of the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. It was that war and the subsequent defeat of the Arabs that prompted intellectuals to try their hand with the cultural weapon and "ideology" to overcome the feeling of defeat.

Enjoying a relative independence, the Jordanian theatre, the writers and playwrights, as well as directors, were able to tackle ideological and political issues without any government censorship or bureaucratic hegemony.

Nader Omran last year presented *gilgamesh* and *Yehya Rising To Heaven* plays in which he condemned the regimes of the Arab World with clear signals the systems ruling in Syria and Iraq. In his plays, he has expressed his resentment of the authority of the religious institution, blaming this authority for the backwardness and illiteracy prevailing in the Arab world, the continued blindness to the facts of the modern age and the lack of insight as to the needs of modern society.

Sawsan Darwazah presented a play entitled *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett, a play which can be classified as one of the absurdities or the unreasonable plays, as they express a constant tragedy for human beings who try hard to resist the inferiority complex created by bitter disappointments while heading towards their unavoidable fate. The play which reflects the real feeling of bitterness has been condemned by some as a kind of blasphemy or as an absurdity.

In the past week Hakim Harb, a young director, presented a play entitled *Hamlet Crucified Again*. The play was based on the works of Shakespeare, Kazantzakis and Baudelaire.

In his play, Harb tried to benefit from the idea of "reconciliation" or peace which ends the murder of the nephew.

Despite Harb's denial that the play had political motivations, critics were prompt to say that the peace occurred between the murderer and victim was an expression of the prevailing political reality in the Arab world.

It should also be noted here that a great number of theatre works appeared in the past years, all dealing with the Palestine problem and the humanitarian issues of heroic feats connected with the Palestinian struggle for freedom.

But these plays carefully avoided "oratory", the "rhetorics" and the "orations" which characterised Jordan's theatres and plays in the 1960s and 1970s.

Fathi Abdul Rahman, one of the top Jordanian playwrights, has presented a play entitled — the *Lost Time* in which he tried to deal with the question of disappointment and frustration of politicians who had believed in the great ideologies and the dreams to bring about social and political changes. The *Lost Time* was indeed, an unprecedented approach in Jordan's theatre work. In *The Lost Time*, the heroine, Suad, who falls victim to the fantastic ideas proposed by Taher (the hero) concerning such questions as revolution, class struggle, nationalism, socialism, social relations that ought to be changed etc....

Suad who is lured to Taher's ideas and attracted by his warm voice as she listens to his poems, finally finds herself dismissed from the university because of her political activities. She follows Taher to Beirut where the so-called revolution triumphs, the homeland is liberated, socialism prevails and "our party leads the people because this party groups the best of the freedom fighters and the bravest of people."

AMMAN CULTURAL PULSE

Differences between Taher and Suad start when the latter asks to buy a new dress and cosmetics like the other women of her time.

Taher goes into frenzy shouting: "what would the other comrades say about us when they see the wife of the leader of freedom fighters indulging in dancing, dressing and make up. It would not be surprising if I hear you asking to bear a child. Indeed this is one of the characteristics of the silly bourgeois class."

By this time Suad has been overwhelmed and influenced by Taher's ideology transforming her as a model of a freedom fighter, not caring for luxury, even her desires and sentiments as a woman.

During the war, Suad works as a nurse in a hospital but Taher soon divorces Suad after bearing her utter kind and comforting words to one of the doctors.

Not only that but he accuses her of treachery. Suad returns to Amman after the war with two types of defeat: One in her fight with Taher and the other the outcome of the war in Lebanon. She loses Taher and all the rosy dreams.

The play clearly depicts the contradiction between what the political ideologies advocate and what backwardness and social concepts really present to the community. The contradiction is embodied in the actions of the freedom fighters of the past era — that is



A scene from the play *The Lost Time*

between their own words and deeds and between theory and practice.

Taher, who later succeeds as a businessman handling the political party's funds, visits Suad to see his daughter conceived years ago, during the war in Beirut.

While Taher is busy with his "business," Suad has learnt dressmaking and music. In the course of their talk, Taher confesses that he had loved no other woman. His insistence on divorce, he claims, was motivated by the fear of criticism by party members.

Taher blames the whole situation on the pressure he was subjected to before taking the decision to divorce. But when she suggests that he return to her as she is still in love with him he hesitates, retreats and leaves the house.

The significance of the play lies not only in the hitherto unknown approach of this kind of dialogue throughout, but also in the new approach expressed in the text of the play.

Fathi Abdul Rahman who wrote the play presented the audience with what is called the "open text". This approach opens the door for discussion with the audience and for listening to their remarks which, according to Abdul Rahman, would be taken into account when planning the next day's performance, and so on...

In one of the shows, the audience expressed their protest at the play's condemnation of the idea of political struggle which, they said, had borne hopes and aspirations for many people due to the great ideals they contained.

What should be denounced, the audience demanded, is the party leader and the other cadres who abandoned their cause and became distorted personalities and shaky bureaucrats merely concerned over their own survival.

The *Lost Time*, which was directed by Mustafa Abu Hannoud and performed at the Al Jaib Theatre in Abdali, is to be shown again next week at the same site.

The accompanying music was a mixture of pieces by Jean Michel Jarre and Marcel Khalifeh. The closing part of the play was performed to the accompaniment of clarinet tunes which best suited the pangs of bitterness and Suad's own defeat in the play.

Americans find new anti-heroine in Tonya Harding

By Arthur Spiegelman
Reuter

NEW YORK — America is revelling in a "bad girl" binge.

A country that regularly wins more Nobel Prizes than any other seems to be discovering one "bad girl" after another to titillate the tabloids and talk shows — Madonna, Sharon Stone, Lorena Bobbitt, Amy Fisher, Heidi Fleiss and now, whether she deserves it or not, Tonya Harding.

Never mind whether Harding goes to the Winter Olympics and wins a gold medal for her country, the question some Americans, savvy in the way things really work, are asking is who is going to play her in the TV movie.

"Our culture has become wilder than any fiction. A year ago you couldn't invent a Heidi Fleiss or a Lorena Bobbitt," says Richard Friedman, television editor of *People* magazine.

All sorts of Americans commit all sorts of crimes on a daily basis, but if a comely, innocent-looking young woman does something wrong, the experts say it's marketable in a big way to both men and women.

What was once spice for the supermarket tabloids has now become a mainstay of the evening news and a main topic of everyday conversation. The number one bestseller in the country at the moment is a fiction book in which a man is sexually harassed by his woman boss.

While men have always been fascinated by the idea of an evil but pretty woman, experts say women are now also intrigued by the idea of "women with attitude."

One example of the latter is a feminist exhibit in New York's Soho Art Gallery District called "bad girls" which features a section on female murderers and a collection of paintings under the title "twisted sisters."

Amy Fisher, the teen-aged "Long Island Lolita" who shot her lover's wife in the head, had bestsellers written about her and no less than three profitable television movies made about her short, unhappy life before being jailed for the shooting.

Heidi Fleiss, the Hollywood madame, had more ink in some newspapers than the Bosnian war, and Lorena Bobbitt's slicing off of her husband's penis has been the stuff T-shirt sales are made of, as well as elevating her to a cut above the crowd.



U.S. figure skater Tonya Harding

Lexicographers are debating whether to make "to Bobbitt" an active verb in their next update of current American usage.

People magazine's Friedman says the "bad girl" phenomenon has changed show business.

"The one thing you notice is the increased popularity of women with attitude from the film *Thelma & Louise* to entertainers like Madonna and Sharon Stone. These women are celebrated for taking power and women are responding to it."

Men, of course, are responding to it as well. "It is the fascination you had for the bad girl in high school all over again," says Friedman.

Now Tonya Harding has entered the fray in a big way with the same questions being asked about her on countless talk shows that were asked of Fisher or Bobbitt — was she the victim of a bad man or did she do it? Did she have a full role in the beating of her skating rival Nancy Kerrigan?

In the demure world of figure skating, Harding and Kerrigan are poles apart in style even though they came from similar working-class backgrounds.

Kerrigan is the Katharine Hepburn beauty, the girl of grace and poetry on the ice, while Harding is the female Rocky, driven by sheer nerve, a skating "in your face" version of Madonna out for gold and glory.

The press, however, is not being sympathetic to her, partly out of the company she keeps — four people, including her ex-husband, already charged with the Kerrigan attack — and partly out of contempt for her style.

Even though you are supposed to be innocent until proven guilty, some sports writers have already given their verdict — guilty of bad judgment, bad manners, advice, hair etc.

When Harding insisted on her innocence, while admitting that she had learned after the fact that her associates were involved, sports writers in one New York paper called it her "I am not a crook" speech.

In that speech, Harding dropped the "bad girl" pose and begged for mercy in the manner of a vulnerable schoolgirl.

It was a return to an older feminine stereotype and the country might not be ready for it. After all being a "bad girl" sells.

Jordan's political system remains under-researched

Studies In The History Of Transjordan, 1920-1949: The Making Of A State
By Uriel Dann

Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 1984, 119 pages.

King Abdullah, Britain And The Making Of Jordan
By Mary C. Wilson

Cambridge University Press, 1987, 215 pages, \$42.50

Collusion Across The Jordan: King Abdullah, the Zionist Movement, and the Partition of Palestine
By Avi Shlaim.

Columbia University Press, 1988, 676 pp. \$40.00

Jordan's Palestinian Challenge, 1948-1983, A Political History
By Clinton Bailey

Westview Press, 1984, 140 pages, \$12.95

East Bank/West Bank: Jordan And The Prospects For Peace
By Arthur R. Day

Council on Foreign Relations, 1985, 166 pages, \$8.95

Politics And The Economy In Jordan
By Rodney Wilson, editor

Routledge, 1991, 243 pages, \$40.00

The lack of objective academic works in English dealing with the Jordanian political system is puzzling, taking into consideration the pivotal role Jordan plays in Arab and international affairs. Most books that appeared in the last decade dealing with Jordanian politics and history do not give Jordan and the Hashemites due credit and reflect bias and anti-Jordanian sentiment.

One such book written by an Israeli academician dealing with the history of the Emirate of Transjordan is Uriel Dann's *Studies In The History Of Transjordan, 1920-1949: The Making Of A State*. The author, in this collection of short studies, focuses on British politics and administrative matters related to Transjordan. In the sections dealing with Amir Abdullah, the author highlights criticisms of his character and focuses on the negative aspects of his relations with British officials.

In her book, *King Abdullah, Britain And The Making Of Jordan*, the British scholar Mary C. Wilson makes no attempt to explore the role played by King Abdullah as a genuine Arab patriot who believed strongly in Arab unity and devoted his whole life to achieve it. Rather, she portrays a leader in search of glory for his own personal gain, and deals with the history of a country through the personal story of an individual. Wilson claims that King Abdullah alienated his family and his Arab neighbours as a result of his own ambitions — an assessment far from being fair to the man who faced the challenges to create the State of Jordan, with courage and determination, and eventually paid with his life as a price for his ideals and principles.

In *Collusion Across The River* Avi Shlaim, an Israeli scholar, discusses in detail the 1947-1951 period. The author criticises Israelis for "aggressiveness," "provocations," and "fanaticism." His claim that Trans-Jordanian and Israeli leaders nearly agreed to stage mock battles to fool the Arabs is a far-fetched scenario that has no solid factual basis. The mere title of the book reflects bias and prejudice as "collusion" connotes "a shabby and secret deal," or "secret cooperation in fraud or in illegal activities."

The above mentioned books use Western and Israeli sources. Mary Wilson's book is based on documents obtained from the Public Record Office in London. Thus, it may be of importance that those books be translated into Arabic. On the other hand, there is a need to translate books, on the topic, written in Arabic, using Jordanian government sources and records, such as: Ali Mahafahah, *Tarikh Al Urdun Al Mu'asser* — *Ahd Al Imara 1921-1946* (The Modern History Of Jordan — The Era Of The Emirate, 1921-1946); Suleiman Mussa, *Emarat Sharqi Al Urdun 1921-1946* (The Emirate of Trans-Jordan 1921-1946).

Clinton Bailey in his book, *Jordan's Palestinian Challenge 1948-1983: A Political History*, begins where the others left off: the era of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan following its declaration of independence in 1946. His stated objective is to "portray the thirty-five year struggle between the Hashemite monarchy and the forces of Palestinian nationalism over the future identity, and perhaps location, of those two-thirds of the Palestinian people who have been Jordanian subjects since 1948. Indeed, this is the struggle that will determine the ultimate destiny of the Palestinians as a

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people." Correcting the facts, the Palestinian people living in the West Bank became Jordanian subjects on April 24, 1950 (and not in 1948 as the author claims), following the decision of the Jordanian parliament to unify both regions. The Jordanian parliament represented the population of both West and East Banks. A disturbing question that immediately comes to mind: Why should the Jordanian-Palestinian "struggle" determine the ultimate destiny of the Palestinians as a people? Furthermore, why should the Jordanian-Palestinian relations be built on "struggle and conflict" rather than on "understanding and cooperation?" The author's implicit objective is to indicate that there are conditions under which Palestinians might settle for a non-Palestinian future and "abandon the idea of reconquering the part of Palestine that (is) Israel."

A recurring theme throughout the book is the author's claim that the root of tension between the Jordanians and the Palestinians is King Hussein's unwillingness to relinquish Jordanian authority over Palestinian affairs.

Recent history shows that this claim is unfounded as King Hussein in the Rabat Summit of Arab heads of states in 1974 did recognise the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the sole, legitimate representative of the Palestinians; and he did on July 31, 1988 announce the severing of all administrative and legal ties with the West Bank. However, not all Palestinians rejoiced over such decisions; and many in fact did oppose them, publicly and privately.

One significant element is conspicuously missing from Bailey's analysis: The fact that since the establishment

of the Trans-Jordan Emirate in 1921, the Palestinians, as well as other Arabs, enjoyed the same privileges and responsibilities as other Jordanians of Jordanian origin including being prime ministers, ministers, and high-government officials.

The author's treatment of some important political events is superficial. He fails to mention that when in 1920 Britain and France divided the "northern Arab Lands into colonial holdings in the form of League of Nations mandates," they did so in accordance to a pre-league Sykes Picot Agreement signed in 1916.

He states: "The Majali tribe in the town of Karak, for example, set up a Moabite Arab Government presided over by one of the British officials who had somehow remained on the scene."

In fact, local governments established in Trans-Jordan between 1918 and 1920 were set up officially by the British government.

East Bank/West Bank by Arthur Day, an American diplomat who served in the Department of State and the Foreign Service, raises some serious issues: "Is Jordan a Palestinian state waiting to happen? Could Jordan be converted into the Palestinian homeland? Is this a plausible and realistic way in which the Palestinian problem might be solved?"

"Or is Jordan an integrated and cohesive state with a political structure that has deep roots in powerful sectors of the population? Would any attempt to impose a Palestinian government, from inside or outside, lead to civil war (as it did in 1970)?"

His answers: No, Jordan is not a Palestinian state waiting to happen. No, Jordan cannot be converted into a Palestinian homeland. Yes, Jordan has a separate existence and identity of its own. Day concludes that the Jordanians and the Palestinians living in Jordan "today are incorporated in a composite society that can only be called Jordanian."

Politics And The Economy In Jordan, edited by senior lecturer in Economics at the University of Durham Rodney Wilson, contains contributions from seven Jordanians, in addition to four international specialists on Jordan. It covers the various aspects of Jordanian economy and politics. The book is divided into five major parts: Resources and foreign aid, the economy, institutions, politics in Jordan, and international relations.

The study is the edited contents of a one day conference on the politics and the economy in Jordan held on May 19, 1987, at the School of Oriental and African Studies of London University. The aim of the conference was to encourage chapters on topics which had not hitherto been treated in detail in the Jordanian context. The book contains much valuable information, and goes far to advance an understanding of Jordanian economics, though it does little to explain Jordanian politics and policy-making. "The contributors argue that Jordan has exhibited a certain economic resilience, despite economic and political problems, and that a national identity has been successfully fostered." The book wastes at the end twelve blank pages which the editor could have used to include a comprehensive bibliography on Jordan. It contains unfortunate spelling errors such as "Bardan" instead of "Badran."

Insight of Jordan's remarkable achievements as a state, the functions and operations of its political system remains comparatively under-researched.

By Dr. M. S. Dajani Daoudi

Under using computers?

By Jean-Claude Elias

When two personal computer (PC) users compare the power, the possibilities of their respective machines, they usually start by arguing about who has got more megabytes, their need to upgrade to faster processors, purchase larger hard disks and use newer programmes. They would nevertheless end the discussion by agreeing that their computers have much more features and power than it takes to accomplish the work they generally have to do.

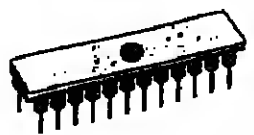
If it is true that there are obvious cases where a PC operator can fill up the hard disk with programmes and data, cause a dreaded "memory overflow" or simply wish the PC would work faster, we usually use only a small fraction of the computer's possibilities.

A PC is a multi-purpose device. The French sometimes use the word "calculateur" or calculator to talk about the computer. The term brings us back to the roots: In its original, broad conception, the computer basically remains a calculator. What you calculate with it really depends on your personal needs, your work or your studies. There is naturally no way to draw a comprehensive list of the different types of applications one can use a PC for. It is virtually limitless.

It is therefore unlikely to find a person who does word processing, scientific calculations, music, drawing, desk top publishing, engineering design, accounting, stock control, games, all at the same time. Even a universal genius like Leonardo Da Vinci would not. In this sense, it is right to say that computers are under used.

On the other hand, if a given person has very specific computational needs in a certain field and his or her PC

chip talk



is not up to the job, then it is also right to say that the computer is fully used, even though it is in a narrow bracket of applications.

Could we then say that it is wrong to acquire a modern 486 PC only to run it at five or ten per cent of its potential? We can find the answer by comparing computers to other devices.

A regular car is designed to carry five people plus some luggage in its trunk. Take a look at the city traffic and count how many drivers are alone in their cars, with probably an empty trunk. The ratio is certainly higher than 75 per cent. Now this is under using (shouldn't we rather say wasting?) energy. Newspapers are an even more obvious example. How much of your daily paper, headlines, comic strips and Chip Talk aside, do you really read before discarding it?

The untapped potential of your PC is never wasted. You never know when you need it. Moreover, it doesn't waste energy and doesn't pollute the environment. Even those who utilise only a small part of their computer have the right to constantly search for better, faster, more powerful systems.

Kuwaiti passion for incense burns bright

By Inal Ersan Reuler

KUWAIT—Recession and the tidal wave of Western culture have forced many changes on daily life in Kuwait but the Arab passion for an exotic and expensive fragrance from the East is undiminished.

Fragments of sandalwood known as bokhour burning on coals is still a common sight, with people wafting clouds of incense from hot brass cups around their faces.

The tradition is embedded in the culture of the Gulf and is a sign of hospitality in daily gatherings and an important part of ceremonies such as weddings and feasts.

In Kuwait, the habit does not come cheap.

Households in the emi-

rate pay up to 1,000 annually for supplies of the finest bokhour, imported from Asia and mainly used as an everyday scent and air freshener.

"I'm addicted to bokhour," said 42-year-old Bou Sami, a businessman out shopping for bokhour from India. "The young do not appreciate it because they are charmed by the elegance of the bottles of false (modern) perfumes."

The finest bokhour comes from India, said Khaled Abdul Mohsen, whose family has been trading in bokhour since the 1950s. Roots and trunks of 50-year-old sandalwood can fetch up to \$1,750 a kilogramme.

The precious wood also comes from Burma, Malaysia, Thailand and

Vietnam.

"A Kuwaiti family would use a tola (12 grammes) per month of good quality bokhour," Mr. Abdul Mohsen said. That amount of the best sandalwood would cost up to \$75.

Local traders say that unlike many Gulf citizens, Kuwaitis are prepared to pay very high prices to indulge their passion.

"It is expensive but it is worth every cent," said Umm Faisal a Kuwaiti housewife in her 50s.

In other parts of the Arab World the use of bokhour, which is sometimes burned in rituals to drive out evil spirits, has become one of many fading traditions eroded by Western culture.

"Those who pretend they can drive out evil spirits use plenty of bokhour, but

households use, less of it now than 20 years ago," said 57-year-old Egyptian Goma Abdul Rahim.

Sitting before her computer screen in a Kuwait City office, 29-year-old Sara — an ethnic Indian — said some Indians used the incense to clear the air for gods to come and receive their prayers.

Before the discovery of oil in Kuwait poorer families used to make ma'moul — sticks soaked for days in water with a touch of sandalwood perfume.

When buying bokhour beware of cheats who try to add to the weight of the wood, warns Mr. Abdul Mohsen.

"We find nails, pieces of lead and all sorts of things in them... Some make a living out of cheating."

Grandpa's day out

By E. Yaghi

Mommy and daddy had gone for the day and left three year old Yusef and baby Amineh with grandma and grandpa. With the first onslaught of tears and frustration at being left behind at home while the parents were off for a relaxing time of carefree childless hours, grandpa groaned: "Oh no, another whole day with the grandkids. How lucky can one be?"

Well, yes, he was lucky, he admitted, and yes, he did love his grandchildren a lot, but he did have to stay on his toes all the while his grandchildren were about, and that wasn't an easy task. Yusef loved to play with anything electrical instead of the usual toys that young children might absorb themselves with. He passed many gleeful hours plugging in and out cords and switching lights on and off and tuning in to or out of the radio or television stations. He climbed on and off tables, opened and shut doors, pulled open drawers and sometimes for fun, just sat down and screamed when things didn't quite go his way. So when his son considerably discarded his children in grandpa's home, and they began to run, scream, yell and get into everything imaginable all over the house, grandpa sobbed to grandma: "How long will we be having them this time?"

"Now don't you worry. Their mother is off to take her exam at the university and will only be gone a few hours."

"Ha!" he retorted. "A few hours indeed! She'll stay a few extra just for the fun of it while we're being tortured. Well, I'm not about to pass my whole day in, suffering. I'm going out for a walk."

Desperate looking grandma pulled on the neck of his cloak and said in a threatening tone: "Oh, no you don't! I've got washing to do and cooking. My hands are tied when the little ones are here and I can't get anything accomplished. If you want to eat lunch before three, then you'd better take the kids with you. Besides, it will do you all some good. The children will get some nice fresh air, and you'll get some needed exercise! Now, don't argue, and don't forget to take your cane with you."

Feeling he had little choice, for either he would starve to death if he went out alone, or he would take the kids for a walk and return to certain lunch, so he bundled the little monkeys in their jackets, grabbed his cane and hobbled down the one hundred stairs with the baby in his arms and little Yusef clutching his cloak as if he would escape. Once down the stairs, (it took him an extra hour to descend), grandpa exclaimed to the little ones: "Say, kids, I have an idea. Why don't we go to the park?"

Yusef yelled on excited "yes!" and the baby gurgled, "gool!"

So, off they went, the three of them to the park. Once there, grandpa set the baby down and both she and her brother began to run. However, before they moved three feet, they collided into each other and rolled down the street before old grandpa could catch them. No one was hurt, so he brushed them both off and set them on their feet again. Yusef climbed over as many places as

he could manage, and the baby, noticing the admiring stares of park goers, began to show off to the delight of any who were watching. It took the three ages before they got anywhere what with grandpa's slower pace and the toddling speed of the children. But it was good exercise for all and the children squealed and hollered with delight. After what seemed to grandpa to be a thousand kilometres later, he bought for the kids some juice and candy and they all sat down on the soft green grass by some chrysanthemum and rose bushes near a row of palm trees to rest, drink and crunch on candy.

He felt good about this outing, but a little tired and hungry, so he said to the children who acted like animals escaped from a zoo: "Say, kids, how about going home now?"

"No!" protested Yusef and climbed up some steps with the straw of his juice in his mouth. "I want to stay here and play!"

And Amineh, the baby, just smiled one of her glorious smiles that always seemed to touch a soft spot in her grandfather's heart, so they remained a while longer until grandpa looked at the hands on his watch and said: "Hey, it's almost lunch time! We'd better be getting back home before your parents come."

The baby refused to walk one step further, so grandpa ended up carrying her all the way home and Yusef hopped, skipped, got into places where he shouldn't, and fell a few times too until they all reached grandpa's home. Then up those one hundred stairs which now looked like more than a thousand. Amineh had a sweet smile on her face because she was being carried, but Yusef complained: "Grandpa, I'm tired. Carry me too!"

Grandpa half dragged, half carried his grandson with his other hand and slowly crept up the stairs until at last, he reached the top. With a great puff of relief, he threw open the door of his house and collapsed on the nearest chair while his two grandchildren howled in anger at being abandoned in the middle of the living room.

Grandma shuffled out of the kitchen and said: "Well, well. Here you all are. Did you have a good time? Lunch is almost ready. Are you hungry?"

Grandpa huffed out a gasp of speech with: "Yes, the kids had a ball! We're all starved and I'm so tired I won't be able to move for a week. Oh-oh, I also forgot my cane, but I'm sure not going to go back and get it."

Later, the children's mother came to get her kids. She couldn't understand that tired look on grandpa's face, for what had he done all day long? That night, the grandkids came back for a visit and right away, mischievous little Yusef began to turn the lights on and off again. Grandpa could only moan and say: "He's turned this light on and off at least ten thousand times today! But at any rate, he did have a good time at the park, even though his old grandpa is sure tired."

That night, poor old grandpa had no trouble falling to sleep and snored to his heart's content. But something funny happened too. He wasn't the only one who was exhausted. Down in their own apartment, as snug as two little bugs in a rug, his grandchildren slept until almost noon the next day.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

THE LANGUAGE OF FLOWERS

For many generations, certain flowers have been accepted as having definite meanings. Thus, a gift of any of the examples listed below may be taken to infer whatever description is appended.

- CAMELLIA: Beauty, loveliness.
- CARNATION: (Red) — Alas for my poor heart!
- CARNATION: (White) — Disregard, disdain.
- DAISY: Innocence, purity.
- FORGET-ME-NOT: The same as the name.
- IVY: Faithfulness. I cling to you.
- LILY: (White) — Sweetness.
- LILY: (Yellow) — Gay, happy, joyful.
- MYRTLE: Love.
- PANSY: Thoughts.
- PRIMROSE: A token of love.
- ROSE: (Red) — Bashful, shy.
- ROSE: (White) — I will be worthy of you.
- ROSE: (Yellow) — Jealousy.

SAY IT IN ARABIC

FAMILIAR EXPRESSIONS

- Don't use hasty words. La tanfa' il fil-kalam.
- It's low water with me. Ana fee deeq.
- Touch me not. La talmasni.
- I must trouble you to speak to him about it. Arjoek ann tokallimahu fee hazil-mas'alah.
- I can wind him round my finger. Howa tahta amri.
- Would that I were here. Laitani konto bona.
- That suits me fine. Haza yonasi boni tamaman.
- I've brought the scheme into play within weeks. Naffathitu mashru' fee khilal asa'ih.
- I can't swallow that. La osaddik haza.
- Success attends you. Ad'oo laka hin-najah.

HUMOUR

ADVERTISEMENTS

★ Over the head of a pretty cashier in one of the department stores in Atlanta, there hung a placard on which was written the following words:

"I have been lately married. Please count your money twice before leaving."

★ Wanted both a large and small flat at same time. Large so as the wife be able to work all day long and have no time to visit her mother; Small so as to prevent mother from coming to visit her daughter.

★ GUEST: "Are you sure your wife knows I'm invited to dinner today?"

HOST: Certainly, yes. Believe it or not, we've been quarrelling for hours because of this invitation."

★ WIFE: "A wife in some countries, as told by a local newspaper, has been sold for 5 dinars."

HUSBAND: "Really? It seems that soaring prices have also reached there."

HAPPY DREAMS

MAN: For a young girl to dream about a man is a warning against gossip and gossipers.

MAP: News of visit from a friend abroad.

MARRIAGE: To dream that one marries is a bad, unhappy sign.

MATCHES: An increase in wealth.

MENAGERIE: Enemies will fail to injure: Friends will be true.

MIDWIFE: An increase in the family.

MENDING: (Clothe, etc.) Unhappiness, submission to others.

PERPLEXITIES

PLUS FOURS

Below are clues to eight four-letter words to be inserted in the open squares in the diagram. When the correct words are discovered, it will be found that each of them may be made into another word by the insertion of a single letter in the centre.

These additional letters, which may be placed in the shaded square, form the name of a renowned Austrian musician.

- 1. Rapid growth.
- 2. A young horse.
- 3. Sacred bull.
- 4. Stockings.
- 5. Vory.
- 6. Sympathy.
- 7. A complete failure.
- 8. Tin piece of baked clay used for covering roofs.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Feb. 3

8:30 Flesh And Blood

Arlo warns his sister Rachel against going out with a young handsome man as he proves to be dangerous.

9:00 Da Beat's On

9:30 Faces And Places

10:00 News In English

10:20 Movie Of The Week — Sing Against The Rock

Starring: David Caradine

A true story about an attempted escape by prisoners at Alcatraz Prison in San Francisco in 1946.

Friday, Feb. 4

8:30 Walter And Emile

9:10 G.P.

Another Day At The Office

A case of an unmarried pregnant woman who is offered marriage only too late, and a case of a patient who sues a doctor for not consulting her over her operation.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Scene Of The Crime

The scene of the crime in a school playground, where five brunette ladies get killed, and a girl presents a lead to the police.

11:10 Yes Minister

Saturday, Feb. 5

8:30 Family Matters

In A Jam

Steve is bullied by an aggressive neighbour. Steve's friend Eddy teaches him a lesson he will never forget.

9:30 The Campbells

While travelling in a carriage, Mrs. Sims is held hostage. Captain Sims and friends get help.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Stuck With Each Other

In this film love proves to be more important than money when two persons — a man and a woman — stick together against danger.

Sunday, Feb. 6

8:30 You Bet Your Life

9:10 Out Of The Past

The Hearsh

A documentary that explains why and how old civilisations ceased to exist, with special emphasis on the Mayan civilisation.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Island Son

Role Models

Daniel has two cases on

hand: A friend's son who is diabetic, and a doctor at the hospital who gets sick and becomes a nuisance.

11:10 The Golden Palace

Rose thinks she saw a ghost because a new guest at the hotel resembles her dead husband.

Monday, Feb. 7

8:30 The Torkelsons

Swear Not By The Moon

Dorothy Jane shows her acting skills when she plays Juliet in Shakespeare's famous play.

9:10 Thirtysomething

Out The Door

A big row between Michael and Eliot over the future of DAA threatens their working relationship and friendship.

10:00 News In English

10:20 Feature Film — Scorpio

Starring: Burt Lancaster and Alain Delon

A story of espionage involving the CIA which hires a professional killer, by the name of Scorpio, to find and kill a Russian double agent.

Tuesday, Feb. 8

8:30 The Respected Family

Curtis has a sleepless and

most uncomfortable night at his grandfather's house.

9:10 Mann And Machine

Prototype

Mann and Eve are after a professional hitman on the loose who gets \$50,000 for each killing. His targets are brokers for selling equipment used for firing ballistic missiles.

10:00 News In English

10:20 The Cape Rebel

Sleuth is punished for trying to escape... but again he tries... with a little help from the priest.

11:10 Night Court

Her Honour

Christine is to replace Judge Harry.

Wednesday, Feb. 9

8:30 Too Close For Comfort

When The Bough Breaks

9:10 Documentary

10:00 News In English

10:20 The Man Who Cried

The Homecoming

Love, after all, survives in the wife's heart even after her husband betrays her love. The events occur during the German bombing of England in 1940.

Madi's works rediscover the world of abstract

By Ica Wahbeh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In the well-lit room of Darat Al Funun where he exhibits his latest works, Hussein Madi's paintings and sculptures have the best medium to convey their message of happy mood, liberation from constraints, bounty and the adventure of search for the abstract.

The Lebanese artist, born in 1938 in Sheb'a, Mount Harmoun, studied fine arts, drawing, sculpture and etching in Lebanon, taught at the University of Lebanon for over a decade and was, until recently, president of the Lebanese Artists Association for Drawing and Sculpture for ten years.

Active on the local and international artistic arena, he held numerous solo and group exhibitions, the last being the one in Amman, opened on Jan. 23 and lasting until Feb. 25, 1994.

Mr. Madi's world of abstract is populated with objects we can easily recognise in the world as we know it. His works would be almost abstract if lines and geometric figures would not meet, cross each other and over-

lap to form stylised shapes of fruit, fantastic creatures, Chinese screens and luscious curves of women's bodies, barely discernible at times but suggestive and rich in meaning.

The line is used expressively, like in calligraphy, the strokes are bold, slashing to form plants, intricate lattices behind which an eye may peer or through which the sun (moon) penetrates to brighten the colours; the tapering line done in one move of the brush, carries continuity, fluidity, movement and gives birth to birds, stylised horse

ART REVIEW

heads, pomegranates (in friezes, dissected, whole, in all colours), reeds in water, cobwebs, Arabic letters, sails in the breeze on a blue sea, a field of wheat or stained glass.

The abundance of fruit and the rounded curves hinted at here and there convey the idea of fertility and bounty.

Experimenting with a variety of media, the artists uses oil, pastels, acrylic, wood, steel, canvas, paper and an even wider array of colours. They are bold, striking, give movement to

the static black line and enchant the eye.

Reds, blues and blacks are predominant, but also present and enlivening the canvases are electric blues, greens, purples, yellows, grays and mauves, all slashed by the ever present, all powerful black line generator of life.

The bidimensional works are given depth by the intercrossing, juxtaposing and overlapping of the lines and splashes of colour, more than by the classical shadow and perspective.

The static figures are given life by the playful colour and by the tapering black line holding at either end the beginning and the infinite, itself begat by movement and generating movement.

Perhaps the best illustration of the artist's gift to transform dimensions and allow them to undergo metamorphosis are the sculptures.

Dynamic while static, immobile yet ready to move, the black metal sheet sculptures of mostly birds and animals have been created by folding with an immense knowledge of articulation and rules of aerodynamics.

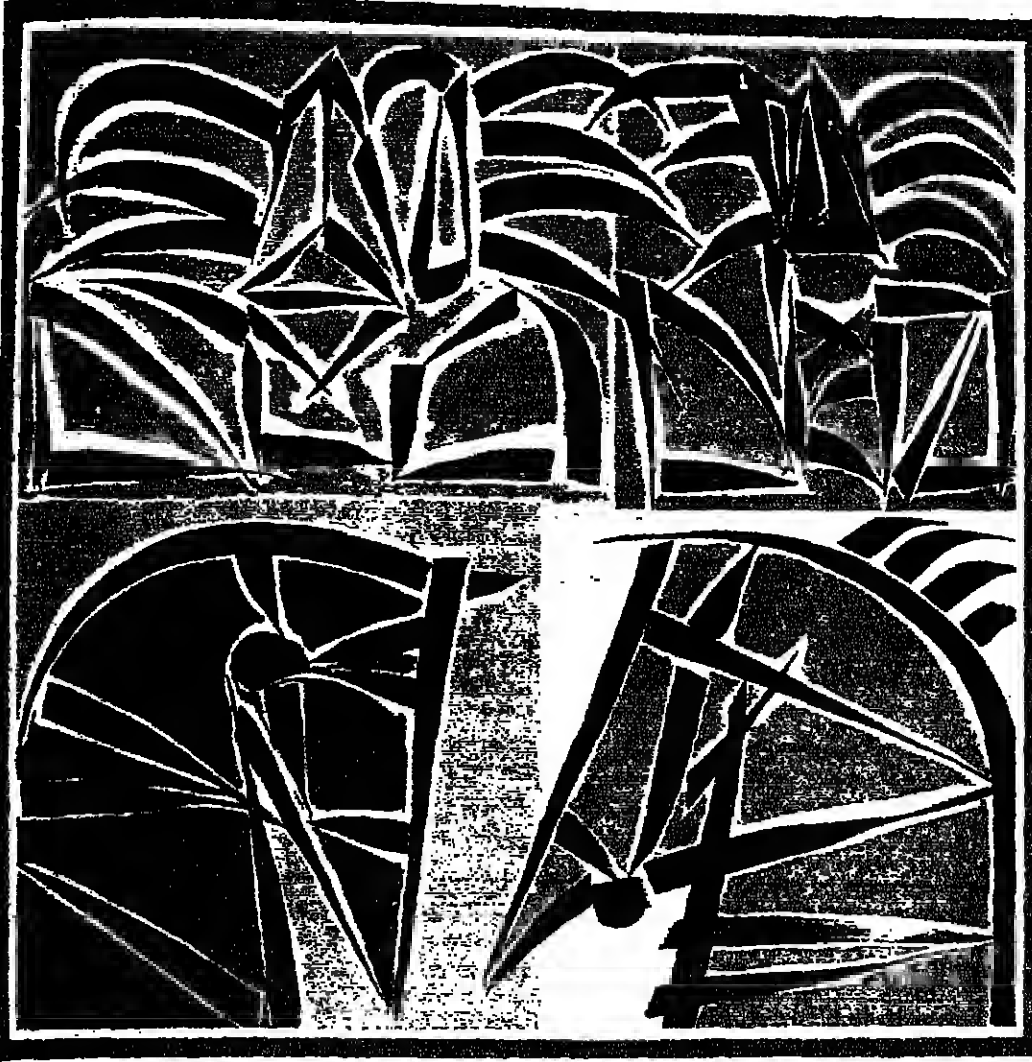
The mat, sensible metal

A sculpture by Hussein Madi

sheet ends in angles, frills and curves that add to its shape and free it from its pedestal.

The artist's works represent his discovery of an astonishing world in which

the eye, spirit, heart and body plunge with a sort of sensual ecstasy and whose inexhaustible changes are a permanent source of inspiration for the painter and the sculptor.



One of the painting by Hussein Madi currently on display at Darat Al Funun

Silversmithing — a source of creativity in the Arab World

By Hana Sadiq Berando

THE OLD Arab culture is characterised by popular culture and folk arts. These are closer to our hearts because they celebrate the individual, his hopes, concerns and creativity and because they interact with the arts and cultures of other nations, enriching them and getting richer at the same time.

The strong relation between arts and the cultural heritage emanated from the connection of cultural heritage with handicrafts. Among these handicrafts is silversmithing, which has been a common dominator among other arts and a source of creativity in the Arab World.

Traditional silversmithing has not only been a sort of income-earning enterprise but also a means of spread-

ing the artistic talent and traditional values of the society from which the silversmith draws his inspiration as he makes his designs and itchings. In these designs and itchings, the silversmith highlights the symbolic meaning and implications of traditional beliefs. By underscoring the social and psychological dimensions of these itchings, the silversmith also gives a clear picture of the cultural environment in which the handicraft flourishes.

Silver has a special economic value in the world. It is used in light and heavy industries. Silver is mined in Arab countries such as Morocco and Saudi Arabia. In the past, silver mines in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Sudan and Iraq supplied the Arab as well as the international markets.

Highlighting the import-

ance of this metal, the old Arab inhabitants of the Arabian peninsula called silver, the "goddess of light" and referred to it with the symbol of the crescent. This shows the high esteem in which they held this metal and the strong connection it had with social and psychological beliefs like magic. It is natural, therefore, that talismans are still being made of silver.

Silversmiths in Jordan have excelled in showing the artistic value of this metal, which in many cases reflect the cultural interaction between Jordan and other neighbouring Arab countries as well as the similarity of the cultures and traditions of the people of this area. It also shows the influence of the immigration and passage of tribes and nationalities through Jordanian lands — for eco-

nomic, commercial and political reasons — on the selection of the metal and shape of jewellery used in the area.

We notice that during the Nabatean age, whose capital was Petra, people were prosperous and the use of gold thus became common.

But iron and bronze were common in poor areas. This phenomenon endured among bedouins until today as the bedouin is not concerned with the material value of things as much as with their moral values and social and psychological implications, as well as the practical use of jewellery or metal pieces.

The bedouins often used stones and beads in jewellery and their women excelled in coordinating chains in a spontaneous way that corresponds with their instinct and taste. Among the be-

douins, these stones had important implications and protective, medicinal usages. They were also connected to magic when they were used to influence emotional and material matters.

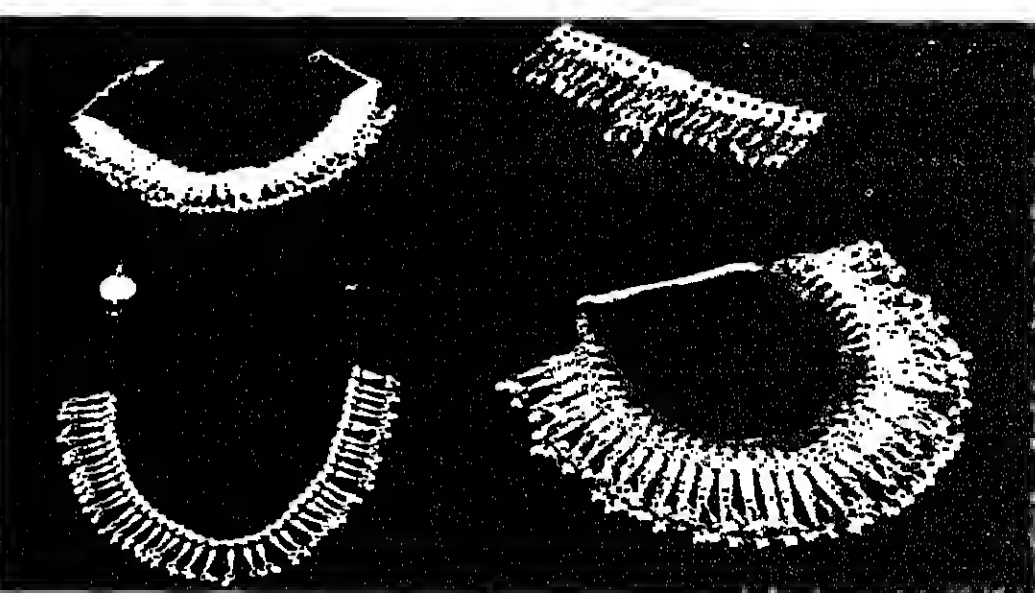
And because these jewellery is used for more than one purpose in bedouin life, like being part of the dowry, and because it is passed from one generation to the other, it is usually heavy and strong in order for it to survive the harsh lives of the people who wear it.

This will be clearly demonstrated if we carefully examine the bracelet of an old bedouin woman. The bracelet will have an old patina. The bedouin women do not change their jewellery as time passes because the patterns are repeated and the same techniques in making the jewellery have been used for thousands of years. This is so because bedouins are usually isolated from the cultural and urban developments.

Bells, which are some times called "Habbat Al Rumman," are common among the jewellery of the bedouins. These are metal pieces that hang from chains, producing a noise every time the woman who is wearing it moves.

The bedouins might have liked these noises because they break the silence and calm of the desert. It is no surprise then that the bedouins have decorated the reins and masks of their horses and camels with bells in order to break the silence of the desert during their travel.

Silver money has for long been used in the cloths and jewellery of the people of Jordan. Among this silver money is "Riyal Abu Reesbeh, the Saudi Riyal," the Austrian coin "Mary



Silver necklaces

Teresa", the British Pound, the Iranian Riyal and Ottoman Pound, the "Majidi." The latter was the most commonly used.

In rural societies, silver jewellery was bought and sold during specific seasons by gypsy vendors or Muslim and Christian pilgrims who brought the jewellery from their pilgrimage places.

In cities and urban centres, however, silversmiths were very skillful. Jewellery was characterised by fine making. It does not have to be heavy because the urban woman prefers having many light pieces of jewellery to owning one heavy piece. The woman in the city takes pride in the quantity and diversity of her jewellery so she continuously changes them. Unlike with bedouin and rural women, the traditional and cultural value of the jewellery is of no concern to the urban woman.

Among the refined silversmith arts in Jordan is the making of the "fleiky" or "kaser shift" which is a narrow, flexible metal wire that can take many shapes. The Armenians excelled in

this industry.

As for enamel, it was brought to Jordan by the Circassians and later became common in the city of Karak. The black material used in "enamel" is a fixed mixture of lead, brass, silver and potash. The mixture is melted and later ground as powder before it is added to a specific shape on the silver piece of jewellery. Later the piece, with the mixture of metal on it, is heated until the mixture melts and fills the engraved shape on the silver.

The Jordanian woman, like other Arab women, likes to own and wear jewellery, especially on special occasions like weddings. As for the man, he restricts his use of jewellery to wearing the dagger and some simple kinds of rings which are usually used as stamps or talismans that have social, psychological or "magical" implications. Children also have their share of jewellery.

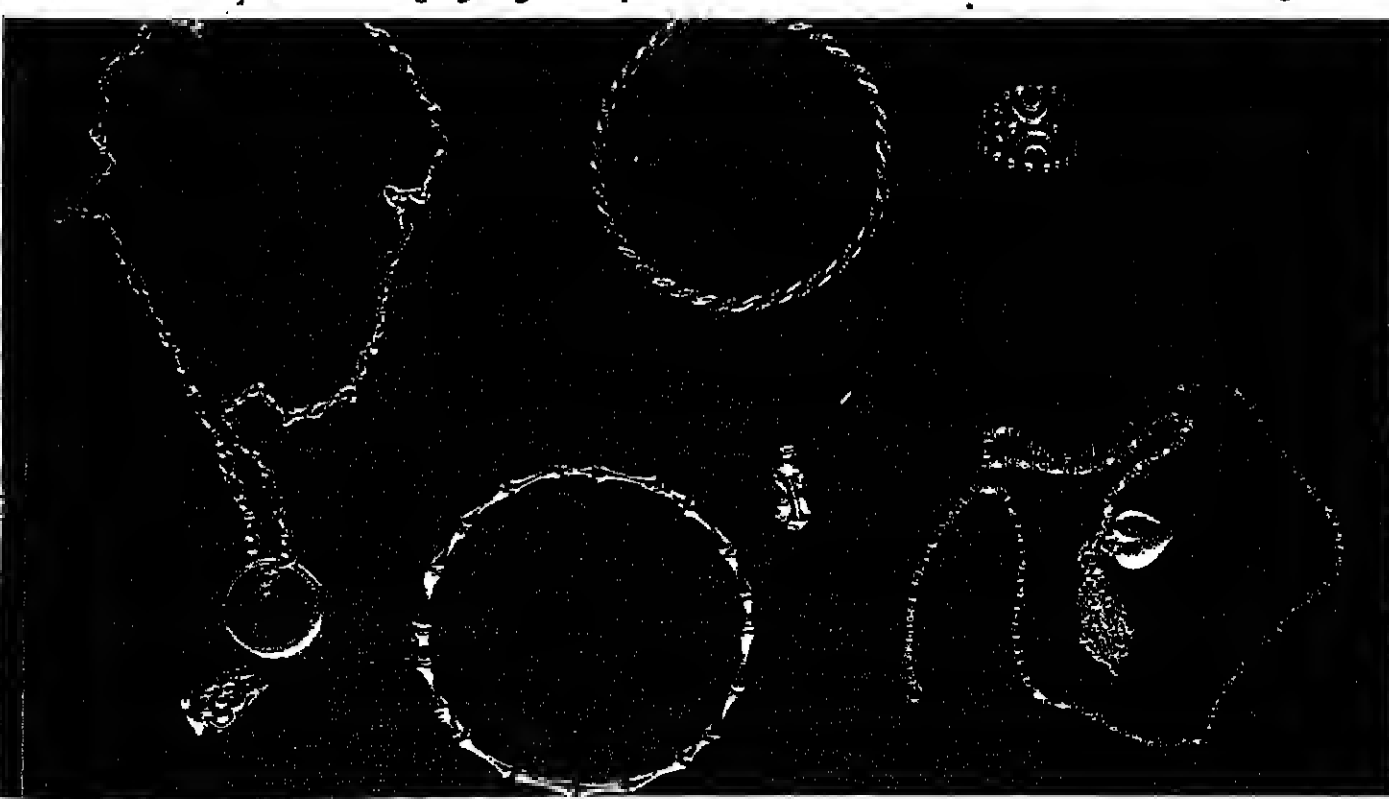
It is noticeable that precious stones are not used in jewellery in Jordan. That

could be explained by the unavailability of these stones in the area, their high cost or people's ignorance of their use.

A variety of bracelets were used but the use of earrings was limited. The reason for this could be that Jordanian women used to cover their heads. The use of "kardan" was common and it has many shapes and weights. Talismans were also commonly used and they had various sizes and shapes. Some of which were triangular and some were rectangular. Others had the shape of a frog, the symbol of fertility, or fish, the symbol of material prosperity.

Silver belts were not commonly used also and that could be attributed to the fact that traditional costumes do not need these belts, which are usually replaced with a hand woven belt.

The decorated silver belts that we find in Jordan were brought by the Circassians who have always excelled in the making of silver jewellery.



Silver jewellery

Russia's top filmmakers say movie industry is collapsing

By Sergei Shargurovsky
The Associated Press

MOSCOW — The former Soviet Union's leading film studio marked its 70th anniversary Tuesday amid gloomy warnings Russia's movie industry is collapsing in the age of market reforms and government indifference.

"My feeling is that today is the darkest anniversary in all the years of Mosfilm's existence," said Sergei Solovoyov, a prominent filmmaker. "Russia might lose Mosfilm forever."

Mosfilm, the pillar of

Soviet movie industry, enjoyed both prestige and huge government financing under a Communist system that considered movies an ideological tool.

Mosfilm went commercial in 1989 but was hard hit by the breakup of the Soviet Union two years later and subsequent market reforms.

Now Mosfilm's sound stages stand idle and silent. Capable of producing up to 45 movies a year, the studio now releases only six or seven, said Mosfilm head Vladimir Dostal.

Mosfilm's profits, which

barely cover its operating expenses, now come from providing technical services to outside productions and royalties from the 2,000 movies it has made since it was founded in 1924, said Dostal.

The studio collected only about \$500,000 in foreign royalties in 1993, he said.

Mosfilm might be able to make more money if it gave up making movies and simply rented its sound stages to commercial companies, but the staff balked in hopes reviving Mosfilm as the heart of the Russian movie industry.

Many of the studio's problems are linked to the overall decline in the movie industry, which faces new financing and distribution problems and competition from abroad.

For Russian moviemakers, Communist censorship was suddenly replaced with commercialism, which meant struggling for private financing and coping with producers' demands.

An average Russian movie now costs about \$500,000 — cheap by Hollywood standards but expensive by Russian standards, said Solovoyov.

The centralised system of movie distribution collapsed together with the Soviet Union.

Filmmaker Georgy Danella said his satirical science-fiction movie called Kin-Dza-Dza, made in Soviet times, was immediately issued in 50 copies and was seen by 2 million people within 2 weeks. His latest film, Nastya, is only shown at two Moscow movie theatres.

Solovoyov said the movie production and distribution market is out of control. "This is a giant system, not only for laundering

money but for all sorts of financial machinations," Solovoyov said. "We don't know how many movie theatres there are, how many people go to them or what kind of money is involved in this black business."

In addition, audiences have turned to once-banned foreign films ranging from top Hollywood hits to third-rate thrillers, erotica, horror and gangster movies.

Last Tuesday, Moscow theatres offered Western films ranging from Cleopatra's Orgies and The Devil Hostages to JFK, Home Alone and Sleeping With

An Enemy.

A recent poll by the Moscow Cinematography Institute showed only 4 per cent of Moscovites wanted to see movies on daily life in Russia.

Some filmmakers blamed themselves for failing to adapt to changing tastes, styles and techniques. They also blamed the government for indifference, saying their industry faces ever-rising production costs and taxes.

"Without serious state support, Mosfilm and Russian cinematography as a

whole will die," veteran filmmaker Sergei Bondarchuk wrote in a recent issue of Rossiiskaya Gazeta newspaper.

Bondarchuk said the government should create its own network of movie theatres and video rentals, grant tax breaks to Russian producers, impose higher taxes on foreign films and adopt laws protecting Russian filmmaking.

Mosfilm and cinematography are part of culture, and culture cannot be judged by whether it is profitable or not, said Solovoyov.

Digestive troubles found in breast-fed children of women with implants

CHICAGO (AP) — Researchers found a handful of children nationwide who developed serious digestive problems after being breast-fed by mothers with silicone implants.

The implants appear to be to blame, but studies of large numbers of children are needed to know how rare the cases are, researchers said in the latest issue

of the Journal of the American Medical Association.

For now, women with implants should keep breastfeeding their infants, said a journal editorial by a children's digestive specialist not involved in the work.

"The benefits of breastfeeding... are well established, while the potential adverse effects... are yet to

be confirmed," wrote Dr. Jonathan A. Flick of Temple University School of Medicine.

Dr. Jeremiah J. Levine, the study's lead author, disagreed. He said no blanket recommendation should be made until more research is done.

"I've let the mothers make up their (own) minds," said Dr. Levine.

co-chief of gastroenterology and nutrition at Schneider Children's Hospital in New Hyde Park, N.Y.

The study involved 11 children, ages 1½ to 13, born to women with silicone breast implants. Eight of the children were breast-fed and three were fed formula as newborns.

All 11 later suffered from

bouts of abdominal pain, plus other symptoms, such as vomiting, difficulty swallowing, intestinal pain and slow weight gain. Some also had joint pain or rashes.

Those symptoms are common to children's ailments. But in six of the eight breast-fed children, the symptoms arose from an uncommon origin — loss of normal movement in the

lower part of the esophagus, the tube that moves food from the mouth to the stomach. Loss of movement in the lower esophagus usually only arises from a disorder called scleroderma, an ailment that affects some women with silicone breast implants, Dr. Levine said.

None of the bottle-fed children had that particular

problem.

The chances of the findings being random are minuscule, Dr. Levine said Tuesday.

Dr. John S. Sergeant, professor of medicine at Vanderbilt University Medical School, said if the eight children are the only ones in the country afflicted, the overall risk is "trivial."

An estimated 1 million to 2 million U.S. women have silicone breast implants, and many of them probably have breast-fed their children, said Dr. Sergeant, who also was not involved in the study.

"I don't think we can know if (the risk) is real until a large... study is done," Dr. Sergeant said.

Use of aborted fetuses spurs ethics row

By Cynthia Johnson
Reuters

LONDON — Plans to use aborted fetuses to save or even create lives have sparked a fierce moral debate, not least among anti-abortionists.

Scientists are exploring the use of foetal tissue to treat a range of debilitating illnesses from spinal cord damage to immune system disorders and the shaking palsy of Parkinson's disease.

But these therapeutic uses have also raised what some see as the Orwellian spectre of such things as the culling of eggs from aborted female fetuses for fertility treatments or even "foetal farming" — conceiving a foetus or cloned foetus with the intention of aborting it for medical uses.

"New uses are being found for foetal material almost every week," says

Dr. Patrick Dixon, author of the book *The Genetic Revolution*, which examines genetic research and ethics.

"In years to come it may be there is hardly any part of a foetus that cannot be cannibalised for use in one way or another."

A revolutionary technique to create babies from aborted fetuses has caused a furious row in Britain with opponents calling the medical breakthrough "grave robbing."

Under the new treatment, first carried out on mice by a team at Edinburgh University, some of the millions of eggs in an aborted female foetus would be matured in a laboratory, fertilised and then implanted into infertile women.

Researchers in South Korea have already produced a child from eggs taken from a dead woman.

British scientists believe Edinburgh's foetal egg technique could be developed within three years.

It would offer many women the chance to have children by ending a chronic shortage of donated eggs. Proponents also argue that if society believes abortion is acceptable in certain cases the fetuses should be put to good use.

News of the Edinburgh work came as Britain's Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) launched a consultation paper on the use of ovarian tissue in research and fertility treatments. Its findings will dictate the fate of further work on the foetal egg treatment.

"The HFEA is aware that while the public is generally willing to accept organ donation and the use of foetal tissue for therapeutic purposes generally, it may feel an instinctive repugnance to the use of ovarian

tissue from these sources for research or fertility treatment," the consultation paper said.

Fleur Fisher, head of ethics and science at the British Medical Association, which is also examining the issue, said most people would be shocked by the notion of implanting eggs from aborted fetuses in infertile women, thus producing a child whose mother had never been born.

Opponents of the treatment point to the psychological impact on children born in this manner and their right to full genetic information about themselves.

Scientists also say there may be a greater risk of birth defects as eggs from fetuses would not experience the pressures normally governing survival and development to adulthood. Even the use of foetal

transplants for therapeutic purposes has proved controversial, particularly among anti-abortionists.

In the United States, the Reagan administration imposed a ban on federal funding for foetal transplant research, despite promising prospects for its use in treating sufferers of crippling illnesses such as Parkinson's disease. The move was reversed by President Bill Clinton.

Considerable research has also been carried out on other types of brain disorders and brain and spinal damage in animals.

Scientists at Kyoto University in Japan reported recently that they had taken young rats, cut their spinal cords, and grafted on spinal nerve tissue from rat fetuses. The scientists say the tissue formed links with key parts of the spinal cord, raising the possibility of therapeutic use in humans. In immunology, foetal

tissue transplants have been tried as a treatment for Di George syndrome — where individuals lack a thymus gland, which plays a key role in the immune system — and some forms of severe combined immunodeficiency disease.

The value of foetal tissue in most of these therapies is its regenerative capabilities. For example, once an individual is born the nerve cells in his brain stop dividing and seem unable to repair themselves — unlike the skin. Transplanted foetal cells may overcome this problem.

"We do need to be wise here," Dr. Dixon said. "There is no point in just looking at one study or newspaper report after another and reacting with rage or enthusiasm. We must look at what the reports are likely to tell us in the next two to three years' time and plan ahead of the headline."

Booming trade for AIDS patients' life insurance policies

By Diane Bartz
Agence France Presse

WASHINGTON — When AIDS patient Greg Emert ran short of money, he decided to cash in the one asset he had that never does the owner any good: His life insurance policy.

In May, 1993, he offered to sell his \$98,000 policy to the access programme of Los Angeles. Five doctors examined his medical records, determined he had one year to live and access offered him 70 per cent of the policy's value at maturity.

Two months later, he had a check for \$69,078 to remodel his San Diego, California home and buy a car.

Emert is part of a growing number of terminally ill people, most of whom have AIDS, who name investors the beneficiaries of their life insurance policies in exchange for cash up front. The transaction is called a viatical settlement, from the Latin word "viaticum," the eucharist given the dying or a provision for a journey. The size of the market is difficult to estimate, but insiders say it's growing by leaps and bounds.

Helene Porter of American Life Resources said her firm was the first to buy policies in 1988. Today, about 50 companies are involved.

A survey of viatical settlement companies found that a person with six months to live is generally offered about 80 cents on the dollar, someone with one year gets 70 or 75 and someone with two years to live 60 cents on the dollar. That translates to an annualised return of 20 to 40 per cent.

Critics are uncomfortable with these high returns, saying that investors are making a killing on someone else's death.

"When people tell me this is ghoulish, I always ask them 'are you HIV positive or are you living with someone who is HIV positive?' And they always say 'no,'" said Carol Cunard, executive director of Accelerated Benefits of Washington. "What I find ghoulish is someone living in an apartment and they don't have the money to turn the heat on."

California, Kansas, New Mexico and New York are the only states to regulate policy sales, while Utah laws effectively prohibit

them. There have been abuses. Carol Hagler of the Waco, Texas-based National Viatical Association said the trade group had received complaints that a Florida man's company had taken over policies and then not paid the seller.

"He was putting a lot of people who were dying in very difficult situations. We were the ones who notified authorities in Florida and urged them to intercede," she said.

While tens of thousands of dollars can be a boon to AIDS patients unable to work and facing major medical expenses, Dinah Wiley, a financial advisor for the Whitman Walker Clinic in Washington, warns that there are risks.

All people may accept poor offers because they lack the energy to search out better ones, or they may fail to determine if they could get an even better deal from their insurance company.

"If you complete the application form and begin to think about a certain amount of money coming into your pocket, there's a tendency to think about it as your money," said Wiley.

The income is also taxable, and could mean that the seller loses state help.

Emert, who received a check two months after submitting an application, was satisfied with the result.

"The people you actually talk to are very nice and very caring," he said. "This company was very smart in their setup. I'm sure the people behind the scenes are ghoulish and vultures, the businessmen."

Companies are eager to buy. One person who requested information was sent an application by Federal Express — along with a pre-paid Federal Express packet to return it. Neil Cohen, a finance professor at George Washington University here, said returns are too high since investors do not risk losing the principal: People with AIDS always die.

"I approve of the concept. I disapprove of getting a rate of return grossly out of proportion with the risk," he said. "Other than the chance of a bankruptcy of an insurance company, which approaches zero, you have an absolute certain return."

Women with epilepsy 'produce more babies with defects'

SYDNEY (AFP) — Women with epilepsy have more than double the chance of giving birth to babies with serious spine and brain defects than healthy women, according to a new Australian study.

The study, published in the latest edition of the Medical Journal of Australia,

also shows six per cent of babies born to women with epilepsy between 1980 and 1988 had defects of some sort compared to 4.8 per cent for other women.

The study, by doctor Carol Bower, senior research officer of the birth defects registry in Western Australia, found women

taking more than one drug to prevent epileptic seizures appeared to be more at risk of having babies with birth defects.

Dr. Bower said 4.4 babies per 1,000 births to epileptic women had spine and brain problems known as neural tube defects (NTDs) compared to 1.9 per 1,000 for

other women.

Neural tube defects include spina bifida, in which the spinal cord is exposed, and the usually fatal anencephaly, in which the child's brain and skull are malformed.

Dr. Bower said more than 70 per cent of NTDs

could be prevented if women ate plenty of A B vitamin called Folic Acid, which is found in vegetables such as spinach, asparagus, and broccoli, before conception and in early pregnancy.

However, women with epilepsy planning a baby

should consult their neurologist because taking extra Folic Acid might undermine their epilepsy drug treatment.

"Women with epilepsy are at risk of folate deficiency in general but more particularly during pregnancy," Dr. Bower wrote.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

THE NBA
By Henry Saltzlander

ACROSS
1 Jargon
4 Anger or Bosc
10 Vast areas
14 Tresses
18 Sound reception
20 TV award
21 — Gay (WV)
22 plane
23 Cuck voice
24 In any way
25 Seattle's
26 Cures
28 Work
29 Will escape
30 Negative
31 To please
32 Conservative
34 Phoenix player
35 — for pump
36 ball
37 Tenible

44 Buddhism, esp. Tibet
45 Overturn
46 — de Viro
47 Forearm bones
48 Alleviated
50 Gypsy
51 Control
52 Cuck shilly
53 Belge
54 Cerean
55 Pealed
56 Free-swimming marine organisms
57 Hedgehog
58 Eisenhower
59 Adherent; suit
60 Fast break for Chicago
61 — Tse-tung
62 Laver

63 New Year's Day events
64 Name in GI graffiti
65 — de Viro
66 Forearm bones
67 — de-boned (JW)
68 Cambodia's —
69 —
70 Armo., —
71 Wading bird
72 —
73 Synonym
74 Viro for New Jersey
75 —
76 Malicious
77 Part of a Muslim household
78 Wedding party member
79 Marm's fighting team
80 Fencing art
81 —
82 WWI draft
83 —
84 Auto firm
85 Drive patrons
86 Brother-Lie
87 Hamburger roll
88 Males obscure
89 Sailed fish
90 —
91 — B'92
92 Spoon
93 Personal prof.
94 Type
95 Low land
96 Caning
97 Even II, for short
98 A West
99 Shade tree

Doctors race to block heart disease in artery cells

By Luran Neergaard

The Associated Press
WASHINGTON — Dr. Connor Lundergun peered through a microscope at the tissue that once clogged a patient's arteries, looking for the renegade cells that re-hospitalised the man just six months after heart surgery.

Doctors once thought arteries were simply inert tunnels, but they now know their walls harbour cells that actually cause heart disease — and make it come back after surgery.

Armed with this finding, a new breed of scientists called vascular biologists are searching for ways to stop the killer cells without surgery.

"Nothing else has worked," said Dr. Lundergun, a professor at George Washington University who has suctioned the tissue out of living patients in an effort to discover how it originates. "The answer is somewhere in the blood vessel wall."

"We're seeing dramatic results," added Dr. Wayne Alexander, a hospital cardiologist director. The research is showing we can heal the blood vessel and reverse the disease.

Heart disease kills about 500,000 Americans a year. Surgery moving clean arteries to bypass clogged ones or opening blocked arteries with balloons in a procedure called angioplasty isn't the panacea doctors had hoped. Within six months, 40 per cent of angioplasty recipients have clogged

arteries again.

So cardiologists have turned to the lining of the blood vessel, called the endothelium — virtually ignored until the late 1980s but now believed to be the birthplace of heart disease.

"We thought it was kind of carpeting in a tunnel," Dr. Alexander said. "We now know it is one of the most responsive, regulated, finely tuned tissues in the body."

When the lining functions properly, it makes the blood vessel dilate or constrict — encouraging blood to flow smoothly or clot and promotes or slows growth of muscle cells beneath its surface. But when fat, diabetes, smoking or other stresses upset the lining's delicate balance, the way it reacts can cause heart disease.

For example, a stressed artery lining stops producing nitric oxide, a cell relaxant that normally prevents arteries from having spasms. Such spasms can cause heart attacks or dangerous blood clots.

The lining also senses cholesterol as soon as it enters the bloodstream. Cholesterol slows the lining's ability to regulate cell growth, and Emory researchers discovered that cells out of control result in harmful plaque.

Lowering cholesterol perks up the blood vessel's lining so much that heart disease symptoms subside even if the plaque isn't removed, they said.

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
B	F	A	H	T	P	B	T
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Finding good in an ill wind

By Xu Chengshi

BEIJING — It was a balmy, sunny day. Wu was working in his field while his two daughters, six and eight, played close by. At about 7:30 in the evening, he heard a sudden rumble of thunder from over the western horizon.

He looked up and saw the sun disappear behind yellowish billows of sand and dust that seemed to engulf heaven and earth as they roared towards him with a terrifying speed and noise.

He fought his way through the half-solid mass to the spot where his daughters had been playing. They were gone. The murderous gale had scooped them up and hurled them away.

The two children were among 85 people killed — 31 others are missing — as the sandstorm howled and battered its way across a broad tract of land more than 1,000 kilometres long in the north-west provinces of Xinjiang, Qinghai, Gansu and Ningxia. Before its force was spent the following day, it had also injured 264 people, killed 240,000 cattle and sheep and destroyed 416,000 hectares of crops.

That was in May. Now Chinese scientists draw lessons

from the catastrophe. Their principal finding is that while nothing can be done to prevent meteorological phenomena that combine to produce a freak storm, a great deal can be done to reduce the storm's impact.

Specifically, they recommend that greater attention be paid to the deteriorating condition of topsoil and vegetation in China's vast northwest region of desert and arid land.

After the storm, the Forestry Ministry sent scientists on an inspection tour of the two worst-hit provinces, to look into the human factors that may have contributed to the storm's destructive force. They urged that the storm be taken as nature's stern warning of the need for more conscientious efforts to synchronise environmental rehabilitation with development in the region.

The storm blasted from west to east through the Gansu Corridor, a valley between two towering mountain ranges. Near the eastern end of the corridor lies Minqin county, once hailed as a national model for sand control.

In recent years, however, Minqin's increasing dependence on groundwater has led to overexploitation of supplies. As a result, 10,000 hectares of shelterbelt trees have been lost

and a further 23,000 hectares damaged. This loss of precious tree cover made Minqin one of the storm's main victims.

Yet in the middle of the county, at the Sand Control Experimental Station, a mere five per cent of melon fields were lost and only one per cent of topsoil was seriously damaged. The reason: A well-tended network of shelter trees.

In Zhangye county, in the bottleneck of the corridor — where logically the storm should have been particularly fierce — the velocity of the winds fell from 22 to 17 metres per second. Wind speeds picked up again as the storm reached Wuwei to the east.

The storm eased off in Zhangye because the county is thickly criss-crossed by rows of trees which form an elaborate, protective grid. Almost 100,000 hectares of trees have been planted in Zhangye in the past four decades, part of a still-expanding afforested area of 370,000 hectares.

In Taole county, Ningxia, the inspection team visited an agricultural development zone and a tree farm, the two sites separated by a small canal. The farm had built up a 50-metre-thick belt of trees to protect it against wind and sand, while in the development zone, large

areas had been cleared for fuelwood and to grow crops.

Fields in the tree farm were barely damaged. But in the development zone, the fields and more than 200 kilometres of irrigation ditches were blanketed by sand.

The scientists returned to Beijing with an appeal for more vegetation and greater discretion in land reclamation and groundwater extraction. They also urged that livestock raising be limited so it did not become an intolerable burden on grassland.

"Yes, we've made good progress in sand control in some places where, indeed, 'man advances and desert falls back', a forestry professor said, quoting a well-known slogan. "But overall, there is a long, long way to go to reverse the trend of 'desert advances and man falls back'."

The damage inflicted by the storm was estimated at \$100 million at the recent Lanzhou meeting. "If the same sum had been spent on planting more grass, scrub and trees," one scientist commented, "there probably would be six million more hectares of vegetation, which in turn could improve the ecological condition of 60 million more hectares of land"

— PANOS



Scientists urge limited raising of livestock which could become an intolerable burden on grassland (file photo)

Deputies demand Malhas substantiate charges

(Continued from page 1)

the minister was referring to "limited cases" of corruption, "the government has to explain that to the people... account for the failure in dealing with the violations and hold those who committed them responsible."

Speaking on behalf of the nine-member National Bloc, Mr. Rawabdeh sought to refute Dr. Malhas's charges that available legislations are not sufficient to ensure the safety of food and medicine.

He said the general health law and other legislations give the minister of health the power to control food and medicine that enter the market and to prosecute violators.

Dr. Malhas was also criticised for "failing" to go through the proper political and legal channels for correcting the wrongs that he said existed in legislation and having those who violated them account for their actions.

"(The minister) bypassed the executive authority of which he is a member and accused it of suspicious silence... the way in which the minister presented his charges and the sensitive issues that these charges touched made the government hesitate to question the minister on them... so that he does not appear to the public as a martyr that government sacrificed at the altar of corruption," said Mr. Rawabdeh in a fiery speech that challenged all the allegations made by Dr. Malhas.

"Democracy does not allow for silence on corruption and wrongs, but it does not accept demagoguery," Mr. Rawabdeh told what many deputies described as the most important session of the House since it convened in November last year.

Speaking on behalf of six members of the Progressive Democratic Coalition parliamentary bloc, Deputy Abdul Karim Kabariti said "dark aspects" of life should be treated through law and reason and not by spreading rumours.

Mr. Kabariti criticised Dr. Malhas for failing to articulate a programme for dealing with the law violations that he referred to in his interview with the weekly sensational newspaper.

"If every minister decided to seek popularity through uncovering mistakes and hanging dirty laundry in public without offering a programme for reform, the government would become an exhibition for displaying dirty laundry," said Mr. Kabariti.

Mr. Kabariti urged the government to implement the law and take legal action against any person who is proven guilty of violating it but warned of the impact that unsubstantiated claims and rumours would have on the country.

Rabin rules out deal

(Continued from page 1)

he doesn't represent all Palestinians."

But Mr. Rabin conceded that Mr. Arafat was Israel's "sole partner among the Palestinians, and negotiations will continue with him, because there is no alternative."

"Jordan is going through a difficult era and cannot afford the exchange of allegations and spreading rumours. It needs to implement the law," he said.

"Rumours find response not only among the simple-minded people but also among those with pre-established positions. So it is not surprising these days to have explosions and bullets targeting our national security," said Mr. Kabariti.

Mr. Kabariti said that many of the violations that Dr. Malhas cited in his interview and the speech he made to Parliament Wednesday were within the Ministry of Health, which is empowered by law to stop them.

He said the minister of health was the person who made the final decision on the prices of medicine in response to Dr. Malhas's statement that some drug merchants sometimes take 300 per cent profit.

But Dr. Malhas received "complete" support from leftist deputy Abdul Karim Al Dughmi who "begged" him not to back up.

Mr. Dughmi urged Dr. Malhas to reveal the names of "the sharks" who he said "fed us the garbage."

"Let's fight them together," Mr. Dughmi told Dr. Malhas during the heated four-hour session.

Mr. Dughmi urged lawmakers to "shoulder their historic responsibility" and force the government to resign because "the minister of health accuses the prime minister of not agreeing with him on fighting corruption."

Dr. Malhas denied having made these accusations against the prime minister, explaining that the disagreement between them was restricted to the interpretation of the law related to pharmacies.

In an over-an-hour speech to Parliament, Dr. Malhas emphasised the government's concern with safety of citizens and their food and medicine.

He said that since it assumed office last year, the government had shown determination in fighting corruption, bringing about reform and modernising legislations. He said the government would never compromise on the seriousness with which it takes the safety of citizens and will punish anybody who tries to violate the law.

Explaining the remarks he made to the weekly newspaper, Dr. Malhas said that he started a process of modernising legislation governing the sale of food and medicine in order to attain "the best levels of control" in these areas.

He said the increasingly strengthened measures that developed countries take to ensure the safety of food and medicine have led to the creation of a "garbage market" that consists of goods rejected in these countries.

Tough regulations had to be introduced to ensure that such goods are not sold here, he said. While some merchants responded positively to these regulations, he said, a few resisted them in order to make exorbitant and fast profits.

After explaining the measures that the ministry has taken to guarantee the safety of food and medicine, Dr. Malhas listed a number of cases in which shipments of milk, meat, coffee and other goods were recalled from the

market because they were not fit for consumption.

He also referred to cases when producers of chocolate have recalled expired goods from the market only to change the expiry date and then sell them again. He said the ministry also closed a number of bakeries, because they used ingredients unfit for use in their products and factories because they did not meet required standards.

Dr. Malhas said stiffer measures were needed to ensure that medicine meets standards and specifications because some companies were using the names of well-known medicines and companies on drugs that they produced according to specifications different from those that the name would indicate.

He said some medicines were reaching the markets without being registered at the Ministry of Health while others were being smuggled from foreign markets into the country and sold without the approval of the minister's.

Accordingly, he said, measures were taken to strengthen the drug control at the ministry through the establishment of a separate department to test medicines and authorise their sale.

The minister reiterated charges that he was under

pressure from merchants and foreign embassies to change the new regulations which he had introduced to ensure better control of the safety of food and medicine.

But, he said, the ministry will not succumb to the pressure, pointing that it was the first time that a minister comes out to speak about problems within his ministry.

The minister's speech, however, appeared to have done little to ease the impact of his earlier remarks made on deputies who insisted that Dr. Malhas brought undue harm to the economy of the country and demanded that he offer proof for his charges or shoulder the responsibility.

The House will resume its debate of the issue Saturday when more than 25 deputies are expected to deliver speeches before a decision is taken.

The government has set up two ministerial committees to investigate the charges in what observers describe as an attempt to end the worst political crisis it has faced by taking the initiative on the investigation.

But "the harm has been done," said one observer, "the government can only soften the impact of what the minister said. It will have to loose some political capital."

Syrian artist paints colourful, 'lineless' nature

By Najwa Kefaya
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Yasser Hammoud, the 31-year-old Syrian artist, is running his first personal exhibition in Amman.

The majority of the 25 paintings on display are colourful oil on canvas, while few are black and white charcoal on paper.

What is unique about Mr. Hammoud's exhibition is the fact that black is totally missing from his oil paintings, while purples, blues, greens and oranges dominate the overall atmosphere, yet keeping some space for yellows and white to brighten up paintings and shed light on the mysterious figures hidden or buried in the paintings. Another feature of his exhibition is the absence of lines. Apparently, this is due to the fact that his oil work reflects nature with all its facets, in an abstract way, but authentically; and black and lines simply do not exist in nature, according to him.

"Nature only provides us with shades and light, with meanings which bring us more to reality, through inviting us to venture into its depth and uncover the hidden to find happiness and ecstasy," the artist believes.

The beautiful tones dance in the shape of waves over the canvas, creating panoramas of colours. Even his still life paintings contain no lines but shades and light.

In Mr. Hammoud's opinion, when looking at a rose, one appreciates the fascinating mixing of colourful shades, and pays tribute to the strong, eternal power that created it.

The colourful, spontaneous strokes of his brush create waves of serenity and musical motion and convey many images to the viewer. Everyone could find certain things he/she likes in this life in at least one of the artist's work, although nothing is clearly illustrated, except the figure of the woman hidden here and there and the image of a cross vaguely and mysteriously appearing in a number of paintings. One could find motion and stillness in the same painting.

One specific painting attracts the eye: that of the woman who is more clearly seen if looked at from the side, where half of her is shadowed by the dark side of the painting

while the other half is in the light, staring at the viewer with a mysterious, expressive look.

On the other hand, his charcoal sketches representing nude women figures in all positions, contain much movement

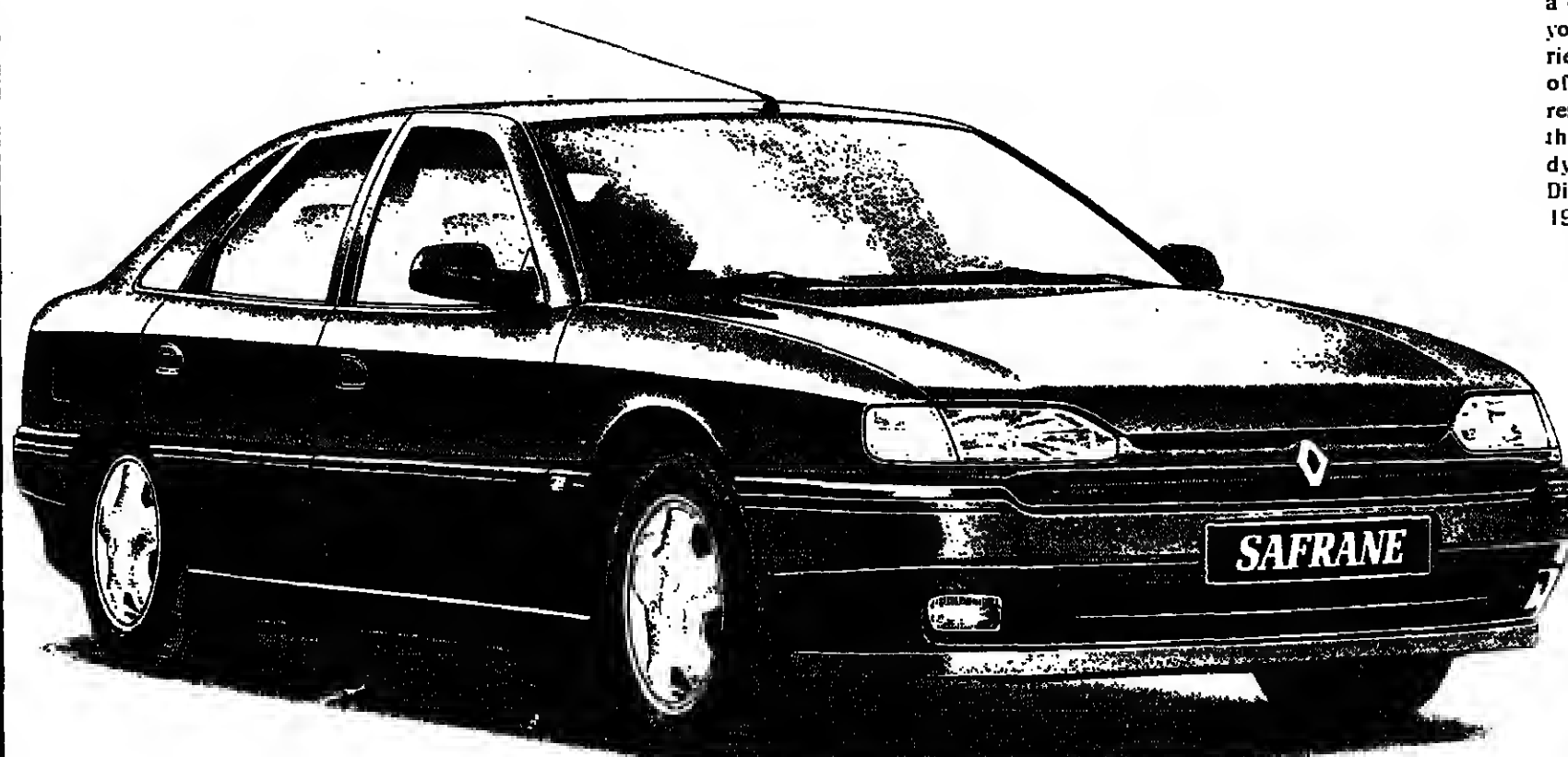
and life and come out very strong, with minimal lines and practically no face at all.

The exhibition is presently held at the Baladna Art Gallery and will continue until Feb. 4.



Oil by Syrian Yasser Hammoud on display of the Baladna Art Gallery

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EU lags behind U.S., Japan in purchasing power

LUXEMBOURG (AP) — Eleven of the 12 European Union (EU) nations lagged behind the United States and Japan in purchasing power per capita in 1992, the EU's statistics agency, Eurostat, has reported.

Among union member states, only Luxembourg exceeded Japan in per capita purchasing power. But the tiny nation still lagged behind the United States, Eurostat said.

Purchasing power is the amount of goods someone can buy with his salary. National levels are calculated on population, prices, inflation and salary levels.

The union's gross domestic product — or output of goods and services — in 1992 was 5.42 billion European Currency Units (ECUs) (\$6 billion) in 1992, Eurostat said, compared to 4.59 billion ECUs (\$5.14 billion) in the United States and 2.83 billion ECUs (\$3.17 billion) in Japan.

Eurostat also said the union's gross domestic product (GDP) surpassed its 1991 levels by 1.16 per cent in 1992, compared to a 2.38 per cent increase in the United States and 1.31 per cent in Japan.

The unification in 1990 of west and east Germany added about 0.15 percentage point to the union's GDP growth in 1992, Eurostat said.

Without the new German states, Eurostat said, GDP growth would have been 1.01 per cent instead of 1.16 per cent.

Japanese shift to Asian, U.S. stocks as they flee Europe

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese investors shifted to Asian stockmarkets as they abandoned Europe last year, with holdings of Hong Kong and Singapore shares rising by a third, the Japan Securities Dealers Association said.

The sell-off in Europe coincided with increased flows to the United States, which regained its position as the top market for Japanese investors, displacing Britain.

Australia, Canada and New Zealand also benefited, while Belgium was the only major European market to see increased investment.

The association said the overall balance of funds invested in foreign stockmarkets through 11 member companies fell 3.3 per cent from \$13.77 billion at the end of 1992 to \$13.32 billion at the end of 1993.

Japanese shareholdings in Hong Kong jumped 34 per cent from a year earlier to \$1.38 billion, rising from 7.5 per cent of the total to 10.4 per cent. The balance of Singapore holdings was up 32 per cent at \$694 million, climbing from 3.8 per cent to 5.2 per cent.

Holdings in the United States grew a slower 14 per cent, but were the highest at \$3.42 billion, rising from 21.9 per cent to 25.7 per cent.

Japanese investment in British stocks dropped 20 per cent to \$2.5 billion — from 22.9 per cent of the total to 18.8 per cent.

Elsewhere in Europe, holdings of Luxembourg-listed issues fell from 18.5 per cent of the total to 16 per cent, the French balance dropped from 7.9 per cent to 5.5 per cent, while German holdings declined from 3.9 per cent to 3.1 per cent.

Among other markets, Switzerland's weighting dropped from three per cent to 2.3 per cent, the same share as Belgium, which accounted for 1.8 per cent in 1992.

Foreign bonds held by Japanese investors at the end of last year came to slightly less than \$250 billion down seven per cent from a year earlier.

Bonds listed in Luxembourg accounted for 44.7 per cent of the total, down from 46.9 per cent. U.S. bonds came to 17.1 per cent, up from 16.8 per cent, and British bonds absorbed 15 per cent of the total, up from 13.9 per cent.

Belgium's weighting rose from 11.2 per cent to 12.5 per cent, while Canada's share fell from 4.2 per cent to 3.3 per cent and Australia's dropped from 1.8 per cent to 1.4 per cent.

The balance of French bonds held by Japanese investors rose from one per cent to 1.3 per cent, while Germany's share climbed from 1.1 per cent to 1.5 per cent.

Mandela pledges job creation as top priority

JOHANNESBURG (R) — Nelson Mandela has presented his African National Congress (ANC) manifesto for South Africa's all-race election, pledging to put job creation at the top of the agenda.

"Our country is in a mess," the manifesto said. "The ANC recognises the depth of our country's crisis."

The ANC, expected to win the April 27 poll with about two-thirds of the vote, also promised to cut taxes, raise public spending, and improve housing and education in a social justice drive for blacks left behind during the years of white-rule apartheid.

"The millions of people without jobs will be at the top of the ANC government's agenda," the movement said. It issued its manifesto against a backdrop of unemployment running at an estimated 30 per cent of the potential workforce, and an economy expected to recover only gradually from a four-year decline.

The ANC said that if and when it came to power it would immediately launch a national public works programme.

"Through this programme alone we will aim to provide employment and training for about 2.5 million people over the next 10 years," it stressed.

The manifesto promised to redress racial inequalities in housing and education and to eliminate past injustices.

Arab Gulf cement output falls far short of capacity

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The cement industry in wealthy Arab Gulf states has sharply expanded over the past decade but actual production is running far below designed capacity, according to an official report.

Cement plants in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) soared to 22 in 1992 from 12 plants in 1980 and designed capacity to 27.7 million tonnes per year from 11.5 million tonnes per year, said the report by the Doha-based Gulf Organisation for Industrial Consultancy (GOIC).

"Actual output rose from 15 million tonnes in 1987 to 19 million tonnes in 1989 but it declined in 1991 and 1992 to 18 million tonnes and 17 million tonnes respectively," the report, published in regional press, said.

GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — have pumped more than \$5 billion into the cement industry to cut a large import bill and diversify their oil-dependent economies. The projects were launched during the oil boom of the 1970s when member states embarked on a massive drive to build their infrastructure.

But the completion of the infrastructure coupled with a steep fall in oil prices in the mid-1980s and the Iran-Iraq war sharply depressed business and created a large cement surplus in the regional market.

This prompted GCC governments to halt licences for new plants for several years until they lifted the ban in 1993 after a boom in the building sector.

The boom, spurred by the end of the Gulf war, caused a severe supply crisis and forced most GCC states to ease restrictions on cement imports.

Some plans have also started maintenance to boost output while there are plans to set up new cement and steel projects, including two cement factories in Saudi Arabia and a \$408 million steel plant in the UAE.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top oil exporter, is the main cement producer in the GCC, accounting for 52 per cent of the group's total capacity. The UAE provides nearly 33 per cent of the output.

GOIC, which advises on industrial policies in the GCC, said cement imports by the six members plunged to 600,000 tonnes in 1991 from 3.3 million tonnes in 1987 while exports rose to 2.2 million tonnes from one million tonnes.

Falling aid threatens African economic bloc

GABORONE (R) — Falling foreign aid to a 10-nation southern African economic group might turn it into a mere talking shop as donors turn their attention to post-apartheid South Africa, regional analysts said.

They said the Southern African Development Community (SADC) had failed to impress Western donors at a consultative meeting in Botswana that it was doing enough to become more self-reliant.

"SADC does not admit it is facing a crisis but the truth is that its future is uncertain without foreign aid," said a western diplomat.

"The focus is shifting to South Africa but so far there is little to suggest that the organisation is ready to stand on its own," he told Reuters. "We get the impression that without huge foreign assistance SADC will become just another talk shop."

SADC — comprising Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe — has relied on billions of dollars of aid mostly from Western donors.

Bhutto defeated over central bank powers

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has suffered her first defeat in parliament when the senate tossed out a bill aimed at reducing the independence of the central bank.

By 28 votes to 11 the senate passed an opposition resolution to throw out the bill. It would have curbed legislation by the previous government which gave unprecedented autonomy to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The ordinance, passed by President Farooq Leghari on Dec. 31, was one of Ms. Bhutto's first pieces of legislation since taking office for the second time last October.

In the ordinance, which must be passed by the national assembly (lower house) and the senate, Ms. Bhutto withdrew central bank powers to refuse overdrafts to the federal and four provincial governments and to set monetary policy.

Senator Sartaj Aziz, secretary-general of the opposition Pakistan Muslim League who presented the resolution, said the new ordinance would substantially curtail the powers of the central bank.

"We had to take action to overtake this problem," said Mr. Aziz, who was finance minister in the previous government. "The central bank should have the power to exercise checks and balances in a deregulated economy as happens in other countries."

Jakarta mounts pressure on firms over wages

JAKARTA (R) — Indonesia's armed forces chief blamed businessmen Wednesday for not paying workers the minimum wage and triggering a wave of strikes as a U.S. trade deadline on worker rights looms closer.

"Our businessmen want very high profits. They have enjoyed low labour costs here for too long," Feisal Tanjung told reporters before a cabinet meeting.

"Workers' demands for the better wages are reasonable because it is in line with government policy," he said.

Thousands of Indonesian workers have gone on strike this week in protest over the failure of employers to pay the minimum wage, which was increased to Rp 3,800 (\$1.81) a day from Rp 3,000 (\$1.43) for Jakarta and surrounding areas on Jan. 1.

Indonesia, which has averaged economic growth rates of around six per cent over the past two decades, has long used cheap labour to lure foreign investment.

Washington will decide on Feb. 15 if Indonesia has done enough to improve workers rights to avoid losing trade concessions worth \$650 million under the generalised system of preferences (GSP).

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris

"I want our marriage to be perfect. From now on only say the words I've written for you."

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

PROAV

TAABE

QUETEA

EVIDID

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: IN

Yesterday's Jumbles: NIPPY BAKED EGOISM MUSEUM
Answer: What the bikers called their cycling publies — THEIR "SPOKESMAN"

Peanuts

YOU DID IT, CHARLIE BROWN! YOU HIT ANOTHER HOME RUN AND WE WON THE GAME!

YOU MEAN I WAS SAFE?

I'M ROY HOBBS' GREAT-GRANDDAUGHTER... WHERE AM I? WHAT HAPPENED?

YOU WERE BLOCKING THE PLATE, SWEETIE... HERE, I COULD ONLY FIND ONE SHOE...

Andy Capp

YOU REALLY WANTED TO BETTER YOURSELF? YOU COULD GO TO NIGHT SCHOOL!

NO, THANKS, PET. ANYWAY, HAVE YOU READ THE PAPER? THE FEES HAVE GONE UP AGAIN!

FUNNY OLD WORLD — YOU CAN HAVE A PRETTY JUST BY STAYING IGNORANT!

Mutt'n'Jeff

WHEW! TWO FLIGHTS OF STAIRS TO CLIMB! AND MUTT DOESN'T EVEN OFFER ME A HAND!

JEFF, THIS HAS GOT TO STOP! FOR YEARS I'VE BEEN WATCHING YOU TOTE THAT BUNDLE OF GROCERIES HOME FOR US — IT'S TOO BIG A BUNDLE FOR ONE MAN TO CARRY!

NEXT WEEK, GET THE CLERK TO DIVIDE THE GROCERIES INTO TWO BAGS!

—AND MAKE TWO TRIPS!

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY FEBRUARY 3, 1994
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: This is certainly no day to take chances or to waste time arguing about unimportant matters as a pesky situation arises that will require your thinking skills before you attempt to handle it.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) Look to a trusted personal advisor if you want to become better known or desire to perform some public task more efficiently.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) If you get out in the company of experts today, you will get a whole new viewpoint that will help you to become more efficient and successful in your own line of endeavor.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Use tact and that fine intuition to get the information you need from experts at this time that will help you to get along better with both business and personal ties important to you.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to July 21) Try being witty and humorous with overly serious partners who seldom smile and you find you make real headway and establish far better relations.

LEO (July 22 to August 21) Higher-ups are watching you closely today, so be very sure you perform all tasks whether in business or personal life in a highly efficient manner.

VIRGO (August 22 to September 22) Try to devote as much time as possible with close ties during the day, preferably at places of amusement, so you can garner the information you need.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Perform those tasks that will please close ties. Impress them with your true ability, reliability and loyalty. Strive for greatest security in that important realm of your existence.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Many benefits and opportunities for amusement are yours now, provided you consider the rights and feelings of others as well as your own.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Be sure you talk over important matters with family tie who is well informed and capable and can give you excellent advice for bettering personal and business affairs.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 20) Contact that personal adviser you feel is trustworthy and get the know-how for becoming more successful in your daily work and personal contacts as well.

AQUARIUS (January 21 to February 19) See that you plan your daily duties in such a way that more time is released in which you can commercialize on your special talents as well.

PISCES (February 20 to March 20) Look to a trusted and devoted person older than yourself for the advice that will assist you to gain your most cherished desires.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY FEBRUARY 4, 1994
By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Make sure that you do nothing early in the morning that could upset present harmony as the Sagittarian Moon squares both Saturn and Mercury making minds acute, but reckless and excitable.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You can have a quietly happy time with the one you love during the day, but it is up to you to take the initial step that brings about better understanding.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) An extremely good friend can today put into motion some operation that will be most helpful to your best interests, or else introduce you to some influential person.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Put into operation whatever activity will help you to get into the good graces of some influential person who will be very helpful for your future.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to July 21) An out-of-town missive or introduction to one far away through the mail can be very pleasing today so that you can be very successful.

LEO (July 22 to August 21) Strive for greater co-operation by associates by subtle kindnesses and small, thoughtful gifts. Then institute some system that will insure the performance of most important tasks efficiently in the future.

VIRGO (August 22 to September 22) Set up appointments with the right people early so you can further your career or make big headway in social or personal life.

LIBRA (September 23 to October 22) Make it a pleasant task to do something very practical for those living under your own roof. Remember it is a privilege as well as a duty.

SCORPIO (October 23 to November 21) Start the ball rolling in the right direction this weekend by having a wonderful time now with good friends at the healthful recreations that will also prove lucrative.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22 to December 21) Take the time to add colour and beauty to home surrounding today and then do a little entertaining that will help brighten the lives of others as well as your own.

CAPRICORN (December 22 to January 20) Being appreciative of others as well as doing the nice things that will bring compliments to you is very fine today and will do much to give you and them a brighter outlook on life.

AQUARIUS (January 21 to February 19) Take time now to be of help to yourself instead of others, as is your usual habit, since there is need to look after personal interests.

PISCES (February 20 to March 20) Since you are much governed by Venus, your charm is most evident at this time and others are very anxious to please you. Don't be reticent.

THE Daily Crossword by William Canine

ACROSS

1 Gather

5 Glorious

10 Certain exam

14 Musical direction

15 Winglike

16 Division word

17 Cleat, e.g.

18 Irritate

19 Aircraft maneuver

20 Loquacious one

22 Solitary

23 Notion

24 Went to Gretna Green

26 Rubbed

30 Underneath

32 Meta

33 Tabriz site

35 Old hat

38 Asian body of water

41 Idealistic one

42 Sord

44 Clamping device

45 Unreliable one

47 Delaware senator

49 Cheapskates

51 Out of danger

52 Second-hand

56 Troubles

57 Gossipy one

60 Decree

64 Lame

65 Cupid's message

66 Speed

67 On a — (hoil)

68 Trusting

69 Hesperus

70 Look for

71 Trail

DOWN

1 Guinness

2 Network

3 Acting acronym

4 Printing direction

5 Raid

6 Wilks

7 Legendary woodcuter

8 French composer

9 Philadelphia university

10 Hudson-day film

11 Oulomunc

12 In agreement

13 Drink to excess

21 Murphy

25 Misplace

26 Sooth

27 — Khranna

28 Syria criss

29 Talkation kun?

31 Objectives

34 Carry on

36 Mid girlfriend

37 Tragic king of action

38 Fumbles

40 Add

42 Slave off

43 Worthless

48 Holds back

50 Standards

51 Gannets carefully

52 Part of T.S.E.

53 Barton or Bow

55 Follow

58 Medical plant

59 Decadal

60 Indian river

61 Crazed

62 Pitcher

Dubai announces record port activity in 1993

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AFP) — Dubai, the main commercial center in the Gulf, has reported record activity at its ports last year, reflecting a surge in business in the oil-rich region.

The emirate's two main ports, Rashid and Jebel Ali, handled 24.15 million tonnes in 1993, an increase of 12 per cent over 1992, the official news agency WAM said. Container traffic rose by 13 per cent, to

around 1.67 million, it added.

Officials said the increase was due to a surge in reexports to neighboring Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, as well as to India, Pakistan, Hong Kong, Singapore and other countries in Asia and eastern Europe.

Rashid Port is among the 20 largest ports in the world, while Jebel Ali is the biggest man-made port. It was built at a cost of \$2.5 billion to serve the nearby free trade zone, the largest in the Gulf.

The airport in Dubai, the second wealthiest member of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), is the second busiest in the Middle East after Cairo Airport.

Last year 4.24 per cent more passengers — 5.67 million — used Dubai Airport, and cargo traffic increased by 16.76 per cent, to 217,000 tonnes.

ILO: Unemployment in Russia much higher than official figures

WASHINGTON (AP) — The real rate of joblessness in Russia exceeds 10 per cent, more than five times the official rate, according to results of labour surveys released by the International Labour Organisation (ILO).

Guy Standing, the ILO's top expert on the former communist states of eastern Europe, said the labour situation in Russia is potentially disruptive.

He said the ILO is recommending a commission under U.N. auspices, with American and European participation, to help integrate labour and social security reforms with the liberalisation of the Russian economy.

Mr. Standing disputed the official unemployment figure of 1.5 per cent and estimates at other five per cent given by

other foreign experts.

"When you see the people in the streets, beggars and the petty crime, you know people giving these lower figures don't have the right information," Mr. Standing said.

He said the ILO surveys showed that many workers did not register as unemployed because of distances to unemployment offices, cumbersome red tape, little hope of finding new jobs and unemployment benefits of \$8 per month or one-fifth the official subsistence level.

ILO surveys showed only one in six unemployed went to register in urban areas. Mr. Standing said in rural areas the figure would presumably be higher.

The surveys showed declines in employment in the three largest industrial areas of nine

per cent in 1993, following declines in the previous two years.

In addition, Mr. Standing said about five per cent of the work force at large enterprises were on unpaid leave, effectively unemployed.

Mr. Standing said the results of three major labour surveys done by the ILO contradicted figures given by former finance minister Boris Fyodorov who resigned in protest at what he said was abandonment of free market reforms.

Mr. Fyodorov was quoted Tuesday in the Washington Post as saying out at a remark by State Department official Strobe Talbot who said Russia now needed less shock and more therapy. "What kind of shock therapy is it," Mr. Fyodorov asked if inflation was low and official unemployment

was one per cent.

The Post also quoted a Moscow-based American labour economist, Judith Shepiro, as saying the real unemployment rate was not more than five per cent.

"We're talking in double digit numbers, at least 10 per cent," said Mr. Standing.

He said the liberalisation process so far did not pay enough attention to reforming management and labour practices in industrial enterprises and that the flood of international advice to Russia has been uncoordinated and ineffectual.

The commission suggested by the ILO would bring together the ideas of Russian reformers and foreign experts and coordinate use of foreign aid to ease the process of reform.

Lebanon awards \$380m telephone contract

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanon has awarded a \$380 million contract for improving its telephone network to three European companies in the biggest contract awarded so far to revive war-ravaged services.

The cabinet of ministers approved the contract, which was granted to Alcatel of France, Siemens of Germany and Ericsson of Sweden, in a session late Tuesday.

Communications Minister Mohammad Ghaziri told Reuters the three companies would also be awarded a \$45 million complementary contract to replace underground cables.

ASIAN FINANCIAL MARKET

HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDAN

TELEPHONE: 621210 / 621211

COUNCIL OF MINISTERS: 621212 / 621213

COMPANY'S NAME

TRADE VOLUME PREVIOUS CLOSING PRICE OFFER CLOSING PRICE

ASIAN NATIONAL BANK	55,460	794.30	187.300	792.70
ASIAN COMMERCIAL BANK	177,680	8.040	1.000	7.980
ASIAN INVESTMENT BANK	920	4.000	64.000	64.000
ASIAN TRADING BANK	11,738	6.450	1.000	6.450
ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK	1,200	1.100	1.000	1.100
ASIAN EXCHANGE BANK	9,238	4.040	1.000	4.040
ASIAN SECURITIES BANK	91,464	3.450	1.000	3.450
ASIAN INSURANCE BANK	295,420	3.520	2.200	3.290
ASIAN REINSURANCE BANK	11,230	4.700	1.000	4.700
ASIAN RENTALS BANK	107,272	4.770	1.000	4.770
ASIAN TRANSPORT BANK	11,460	3.200	1.000	3.200
ASIAN UTILITIES BANK	4,160	4.450	1.000	4.450
ASIAN WATER BANK	11,460	3.200	1.000	3.200
ASIAN POWER BANK	181,863	1.990	990	1.990
ASIAN TELECOM BANK	177,680	6.450	1.000	6.450
ASIAN MEDIA BANK	744,142	3.500	3.000	3.450
ASIAN CONSTRUCTION BANK	31,470	4.400	1.000	4.400
ASIAN PETROLEUM BANK	7,314	1.750	1.500	1.750
ASIAN MINING BANK	9,981	1.400	1.000	1.400
ASIAN AGRICULTURE BANK	2,940	1.350	1.270	1.340
ASIAN FISHERIES BANK	3,000	1.000	1.000	1.000
ASIAN FORESTRY BANK	137,746	1.480	1.450	1.450
ASIAN TOURISM BANK	3,000	4.500	1.000	4.500
ASIAN CULTURE BANK	3,990	3.450	1.000	3.450
ASIAN ARTS BANK	1,000	1.700	1.000	1.700
ASIAN SPORTS BANK	28,501	3.100	3.200	3.200
ASIAN RECREATION BANK	1,000	1.700	1.000	1.700
ASIAN EDUCATION BANK	237,415	4.450	4.400	4.400
ASIAN HEALTHCARE BANK	1,740	1.740	1.740	1.740
ASIAN SOCIAL SERVICES BANK	4,111	1.640	1.640	1.640
ASIAN COMMUNITY BANK	35,951	14.000	14.000	14.000
ASIAN ENVIRONMENTAL BANK	113,841	1.700	1.650	1.650
ASIAN SCIENCE BANK	104,540	1.150	1.150	1.150
ASIAN TECHNOLOGY BANK	41,300	1.000	1.000	1.000
ASIAN INNOVATION BANK	21,844	1.000	1.000	1.000
ASIAN RESEARCH BANK	56,375	3.300	3.300	3.300
ASIAN ANALYTICS BANK	117,834	1.700	1.700	1.700
ASIAN CONSULTING BANK	21,844	1.000	1.000	1.000
ASIAN MANAGEMENT BANK	10,310	2.750	2.750	2.750
ASIAN OPERATIONS BANK	21,844	1.000	1.000	1.000
ASIAN LOGISTICS BANK	4,950	3.000	3.950	4.850
ASIAN SUPPLY BANK	21,844	1.000	1.000	1.000
ASIAN DEMAND BANK	749,043	2.620	2.810	2.980
ASIAN DISTRIBUTION BANK	1,000	1.000	1.000	1.000
ASIAN RETAIL BANK	6,494	0.150	0.280	0.170
ASIAN WHOLESALE BANK	9,974	0.350	0.350	0.350
ASIAN IMPORT BANK	99,704	0.420	0.420	0.420
ASIAN EXPORT BANK	1,000	1.000	1.000	1.000
ASIAN TRADE BANK	1,409	0.100	1.690	1.590
ASIAN COMMERCE BANK	8,171	0.850	0.850	0.850
ASIAN FINANCE BANK	1,000	1.000	1.000	1.000
ASIAN INVESTMENT BANK	10,986	3.440	3.550	3.440
ASIAN SECURITIES BANK	8,338	1.700	7.500	7.500
ASIAN INSURANCE BANK	17,480	1.000	1.000	1.000
ASIAN REINSURANCE BANK	13,644	3.300	1.210	1.150
ASIAN RENTALS BANK	10,000	0.190	0.190	0.190
ASIAN TRANSPORT BANK	81,869	1.450	4.000	7.900
ASIAN UTILITIES BANK	12,975	3.300	3.350	3.300
ASIAN WATER BANK	21,844	1.000	1.000	1.000
ASIAN POWER BANK	8,000	5.610	4.000	4.620
ASIAN TELECOM BANK	41,307	1.900	1.900	1.900

G S A D TOTAL 2,821,231

NO. OF TRADING ORDERS BY PARALLEL MARKET 252433
TRADED VOLUME IN THE PARALLEL MARKET 746234

De Klerk says right wing remains a white minority

CAPE TOWN (Agencies) — President F.W. De Klerk said Wednesday the fourth anniversary of his decision to dismantle apartheid, he remained a white minority.

"I sincerely believe that the National Party has basically overwhelming support amongst South Africa's whites and particularly amongst Afrikaners," he said in a telephone interview with state television.

Mr. De Klerk was scheduled to make a major anniversary address in Johannesburg later Wednesday to party supporters preparing for the country's first all-race election in April.

Mr. De Klerk told television viewers the number of whites supporting parties on the right, including the militant Afrikaner Resistance Movement (AWB), had not grown since he turned his back on segregation and lifted a 30-year ban on the ANC.

Recalling his bombshell address to the white-dominated parliament on Feb. 2, 1990, Mr. De Klerk said his legislation of the ANC and Nelson Mandela's release a week later were considered steps in line with the gradual reforms of his predecessor, F.W. Botha.

"But on that day everything came together. We finally decided and could announce that the new South Africa would come," he said.

At the same time, Mr. Man-

dela, whose African National Congress (ANC) was legalised in that historic address, revisited the Victor Verster Prison near Cape Town, where he spent the last of his 27 years in jail for opposing apartheid.

Under the banner "never again," Mr. Mandela, 75, led a march of former political prisoners and victims of apartheid, including people tortured by the country's white police.

Mr. Mandela laid a wreath for the victims of apartheid against a barbed-wire barricade outside the prison and made a strong plea for peace.

"I hope all of us, young and old... will recognise how important it is to avoid any situation that will lead to bloodshed and a lot of suffering," Mr. Mandela told a crowd of several hundred gathered outside the farm prison.

"We have fought our battle in the past this is a time for us to unite and build our country. It is in a spirit of reconciliation that I have made this gesture," he said in a reference to the wreath of white flowers that he laid at the prison entrance.

Scores of policemen and prison guards lined the perimeter of the prison farm in the picturesque Cape winelands north-east of Cape Town.

Coils of razor wire ringed the prison and a police helicopter hovered overhead.

The ANC's policy-making National Working Committee met into the night Monday to

discuss a deadlock in government and ANC talks with black and white conservatives committed to a boycott of the April 27 poll.

Spokeswoman Gill Marcus said the 26-member committee would make no comment on its meeting until the government, the ANC and the right-wing Freedom Alliance met again Thursday.

The Freedom Alliance, grouping black and white parties seeking greater regional autonomy in a post-apartheid South Africa, has demanded changes to the voting arrangements and constitution-making powers for nine proposed provinces.

Alliance spokesman Rowan Cronje said Wednesday that right-wingers remained eager to negotiate changes that would make it possible for them to enter the electoral process.

But he added: "What is on the table is already our bottom line."

Meanwhile, the Ciskei homeland reacted furiously Wednesday to its exclusion from the Transitional Executive Council (TEC) after it decided to drop out of the conservative Freedom Alliance and contest South Africa's first all-race election.

Ciskei spokesman Cedric Harrop told the Eastern Cape News Agency that the government rejected and was enraged by a surprise decision of the

TEC, a multiparty body set up to oversee government in the run-up to the April 26-28 poll.

Terming the decision "political manoeuvring," Mr. Harrop said Ciskei, after announcing its decision to join the TEC, had last week asked for temporary membership while new legislation allowing it to join was tested by the Ciskei Supreme Court.

The TEC said it would consider the request, then unexpectedly expelled the homeland, officially informing it of the decision only Wednesday, after first having notified the media, Mr. Harrop charged.

He said the Ciskei cabinet was currently meeting to decide whether to continue waiting for a Supreme Court ruling, or to immediately enact the bill that will enable it to join the TEC.

The TEC ruling, Mr. Harrop said, meant that Ciskei troops with the multi-National Peacekeeping Force, which began training at a base in Bloemfontein on Jan. 24, faced the risk of being sent back.

In a statement Tuesday, the TEC said Ciskei was given until noon, Jan. 28, to apply for membership but had failed to do so.

This meant, the statement said, that the homeland must "withdraw from all sub-structures of the TEC, including the... National Peacekeeping Force."



Cambodian army fires an artillery round at to capture the rebel headquarters in Anlong Veng. Khmer Rouge rebel positions during the offensive (AFP)

Fall of Khmer Rouge HQ 'imminent'

PHNOM PENH (R) — Advance units of the Cambodian army are closing on the Khmer Rouge's northern headquarters at Anlong Veng and its capture is imminent, a government spokesman said Wednesday.

Sieng La Presse told reporters at a weekly news briefing that government military units had moved "very close" to Anlong Veng but he was unable to say how far.

"According to reports I can say very close — I cannot tell you how many days that we can capture that, but it will be soon," La Presse said.

He said progress by the army was being hindered by land mines laid by the Khmer Rouge.

Remote Anlong Veng lies 310 kilometres northwest of Phnom Penh and has served as the Khmer Rouge's key northern headquarters.

The capture of the rebel base is part of the government's strategy to gain political leverage over the Maoist-inspired rebels before the ex-

pected resumption of political negotiations, La Presse said. Fighting between both sides has increased with the onset of the dry season.

Asked how soon the capture of the base would happen, the government's military spokesman, Colonel Nhean Monor said, "I can't say, but it will be taken shortly."

Guerrillas were continuing to keep up a mortar barrage on a beleaguered government outpost in far-north Chom Khsan but casualties were not serious, the military spokesman said.

Earlier, Khmer Rouge guerrillas launched an offensive against the town, apparently in revenge for the government attack at Anlong Veng. Chom Khsan lies about 90 kilometres east of Anlong Veng.

La Presse said 13 government soldiers had been killed and 11 wounded in the last week of fighting near Anlong Veng.

Civilians had also been caught in the fighting and at least four died and eight were injured, he said.

Khmer Rouge guerrilla losses were estimated at 43 dead with 30 defectors.

No details of Khmer Rouge injured or prisoners were given.

Government forces seized 131 weapons in addition to a quantity of mines and other military equipment, said La Presse.

According to one local newspaper report, the government drive is supported by at least five armoured personnel carriers, five tanks, truck-mounted multiple-rocket launchers, 130mm artillery and other heavy equipment.

Sources returning last week from northwest Siem Reap province reported that Russian-built Mi8 helicopters armed with rockets were being used to support ground operations around Anlong Veng.

The Khmer Rouge rejected participation in last May's U.N.-organised election and has continued to wage a low-intensity guerrilla war to reinforce its demands for an advisory role in government.

Seoul bids to cool U.S. war of words with N. Korea

SEOUL (R) — South Korea is bidding to talk its U.S. allies and Communist North Korea off the ledge as their war of words over nuclear inspections scales new heights.

Although keen to ally fears over a North Korean nuclear buildup, Seoul fears that unnecessary war talk from the United States will push its reclusive neighbour into a hasty and potentially catastrophic response.

In three weeks, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will meet in Vienna to decide what to do about North Korea, which refuses to allow inspectors into plants where the West suspects nuclear arms are being developed.

The IAEA can do nothing itself, but is likely to refer the issue to the United Nations Security Council, which has the power to impose sanctions on Pyongyang's stagnant economy.

But the North remains defiant, threatening to do what Washington dreads — become the first nation ever to withdraw from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT), a global accord limiting the spread of nuclear arms.

Seoul's Foreign Minister Han Sung-Joo Wednesday aided a voice of moderation to the debate, calling for a shift from the climate of confrontation.

"What the government must first consider in dealing with the North Korean nuclear issue is the need to prevent it from worsening dramatically," Mr. Han told a meeting of overseas mission chiefs, in Seoul for an annual conference.

"We need to have a flexible but firm attitude," he said. Patience with North Korea is running out in Washington after a nearly a year of on-off negotiations, and the Senate Tuesday called on President Bill Clinton to seek international consensus over isolating Pyongyang economically.

The Senate also said that if North Korea continued to defy inspection of suspect nuclear facilities, Washington should "enhance the defence capability of U.S. forces by preparing to introduce tactical nuclear weapons in South Korea."

Seoul has watched with unease as Washington and Pyongyang have polarised their positions.

Prime Minister Lee Hoi-Chang issued a conciliatory message this week, saying news reports of increasing tensions on the Korean peninsula, arising from the anticipated arrival soon of U.S. Patriot defensive missiles, were misguided.

"The news reports are either false or exaggerated. No special change has been detected in relations between South and North Korea," Mr. Lee said.

Ghali against intervention in dispute over Kashmir

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The U.N. secretary-general has said he opposes intervening in the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir as long as both countries are engaged in bilateral talks.

Boutros Ghali made his comments a day after Pakistan accused India of gross human rights violations in Kashmir. In Geneva, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan likened the situation in Kashmir to the "darkest days of the holocaust."

After the 1948 war between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, the U.N. Security Council called for a plebiscite throughout Kashmir, but it has never been held.

Asked why he was not pressing for a plebiscite, Dr. Ghali said: "Because we need the agreement of the two main protagonists of this problem — India, and Pakistan. Unless we have the agreement of the two sides, we will not be able to intervene," he said.

Indian and Pakistani officials met early January in Islamabad to discuss Kashmir. The talks did not make any breakthrough, and Pakistan has refused to schedule fresh talks before India addresses human rights concerns.

India and Pakistan have gone to war twice over Kashmir since the 1947 partition of former British colonial India into mainly Islamic Pakistan and mostly Hindu India.

More than 8,200 have died in Kashmir since late 1989, when Muslim militants' campaign for an independent homeland flared into violence.

Yeltsin claims parliament has violated constitution

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin told members of parliament Tuesday that technically they had violated the constitution when they elected Communist speaker Ivan Rybkin.

In a letter to members of the Duma or lower house, Mr. Yeltsin said the deputies had been wrong to take as the basis for an absolute majority the number of deputies elected rather than the number of seats.

Mr. Yeltsin emphasised that the constitution required parliamentary decisions to be approved by at least 225 out of 450 deputies in the Duma or lower house and 89 out of 178 in the Federation Council or upper house.

However because of a boycott in separatist Chechnya and a lack of candidates in some areas, only 444 deputies were effectively elected to the lower house and 171 to the upper house.

At its first session, the parliament decided to count only on the basis of the number of seats filled but Mr. Yeltsin

India accuses Pakistan of sheltering and arming Kashmir militants. Pakistan denies the charge, but the Islamabad government says it supports the aspirations of the Kashmiri people.

Indo-Pakistani wars in 1948 and 1965 have left Kashmir divided and disputed between the two countries.

Meanwhile the youth wing of India's ruling party announced plans Wednesday to march to the border with Pakistan to protest its alleged support for Muslim rebels in Kashmir.

Youth Congress (I) President Maninder Singh Bitta said 50,000 party members would march to the border Friday. When a general strike has been called in Pakistan in solidarity with the Muslim population in Kashmir.

The marchers will not cross the border nor will they try to provoke Pakistani troops deployed on the other side. He told a news conference.

"But Pakistan should know that our youth are ready to fight for their country," Mr. Bitta said.

The party activists are scheduled to march from the Sikh holy city of Amritsar in Punjab state to the militarised sector of Atari on the Pakistan border, one of two land routes open between the two countries.

Mr. Bitta also said the march would kick off a month-long Youth Congress campaign to protest Pakistani backing for the bloody Muslim secessionist struggle in the northern state. Involving a month of anti-Pakistan rallies and demonstrations across India's 25 states beginning Friday.

reminded them Tuesday that the country's basic law "has no provision for chambers composed of 171 seats or 444."

In his letter which was dated Jan. 24, Mr. Yeltsin said "under the constitution, decision has to be taken by a majority of seats and not of deputies present."

He said "liberal interpretations of constitutional rules create a precedent which the chambers could use in the future to pass federal laws or take other decisions in breach of the constitution."

Only the Constitutional Court is empowered to rule one way or the other. If Mr. Yeltsin is proved right, the Duma will have to elect a new speaker.

Mr. Sybkin was elected with 223 votes — just enough under the present rules but two less than the 225 stipulated by the constitution.

The Duma which meets Friday may ask the Constitutional Court to settle the issue or it can leave it to Mr. Yeltsin to take the initiative.

Italian leftist pact puts pressure on right

ROME (R) — Italy's centre and right-wing politicians are under mounting pressure to form a coalition to rival a new eight-party leftist alliance launched ahead of landmark March elections.

The left stole a lead in the scramble to form alliances — seen as the key to victory under a new simple majority electoral system — with the launch of the "progressive" pact led by the ex-Communist Democratic Party of the Left (PDS).

The Progressives were likened by PDS leader Achille Occhetto to a slick military machine.

Also unveiled Tuesday was a "freedom alliance" formed by millionaire-turned-politician Silvio Berlusconi with two small centrist groups, the Christian Democratic Centre and the Union of the centre.

Mr. Berlusconi entered politics last week at the head of a conservative "Forza Italia" (Go Italy) movement and is trying to put together an alliance that can credibly challenge the left.

One of Italy's richest men, Mr. Berlusconi still faces the tricky task of wooing other parties including the pro-autonomy Northern League into a pact.

U.S.: China falls far short on human rights

WASHINGTON (R) — The United States, approaching a crucial decision on trade with China, said Tuesday Beijing was continuing to hold hundreds, perhaps thousands, of political prisoners.

Delivering its first version of the State Department's annual human rights report, the Clinton administration said China made positive moves on rights in 1993 but still fell "far short" of internationally recognised norms.

This conclusion, while expected, put an official stamp on the view of administration rights experts and put new pressure on Beijing and Washington to make progress in this area in time for President Bill Clinton to renew favourable U.S. trade benefits for China by a June deadline.

The report, covering 193 countries and more than 1,000 pages, faulted Beijing for failing to account publicly for thousands of people detained during the military crackdown on pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

While impossible to know exactly, it said, "in 1993 hundreds, perhaps thousands, of political prisoners remained under detention."

The report also harshly criticised key U.S. allies in the

Middle East — Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia and Turkey — for serious rights abuses. It said police torture and killing were still rampant in neighbouring Mexico, though in decline.

The report concluded that, overall, last year was a difficult one for human rights in which setbacks outweighed advances in some parts of the world.

"Armed conflict posed the most significant risk to human rights," it said, citing Bosnia, Sudan, Burundi, Somalia, Angola, Iraq, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

More than its predecessors, the Clinton administration appeared to highlight concerns about forced labour, especially involving children and servants. It said slavery still exists in some countries, particularly Mauritania and Sudan.

It also placed more emphasis on women's rights, including issues like rape, female genital mutilation and the rights of women to choose the number and spacing of their children.

Secretary of State Warren Christopher told reporters he was "proud" of the report, which showed "a degree of candor and frankness" that years ago would not have been possible.

He said the United States

does not consider its own rights record to be perfect and took pains not to spotlight China, saying it was important to realise the report seeks "to apply a universally high standard" to all countries.

Department counsellor Tim Wirth told a news briefing that Mr. Clinton had made human rights and the promotion of democracy "fundamental to our foreign policy."

In the Bosnian civil war, the report concluded that "all nationalities were victimised" and all sides — Serb, Muslim and Croat — joined in committing "egregious abuses."

In Africa, it said Zaire was undergoing its worst human rights crisis since the end of the civil war in the 1960s.

But it found hope in the fact that the worldwide grass-roots movement for human rights and democratic change had gathered momentum and that international organisations, such as the United Nations, had taken new steps to institutionally promote rights and punish violators.

China's human rights record is a special interest because Mr. Clinton has said he would not renew favourable trade benefits for Chinese exports to the United States unless Beijing shows significant overall

progress in this area. While senior officials have said Mr. Clinton is prepared to take that decision, there is considerable concern that ending the benefits, called most favoured nation (MFN) trade status, will further damage already fragile U.S.-China ties.

China has an annual trade surplus of more than \$20 billion with the United States.

Some officials have said they would like to do away with the annual review tying human rights to MFN. Mr. Wirth said that is a long-term goal "but we have a long way to go."

The rights report gave Beijing credit for releasing some prominent political prisoners and detained Catholic clergy, for allowing some dissidents to leave the country and agreeing to consider an international Red Cross request to visit China.

It said a decade of rapid economic growth reduced Communist Party and government control over the economy and permitted larger numbers of Chinese to have more control over their lives.

But it also said Beijing still repressed domestic critics and failed to control abuses by its security forces, including torture, forced confessions and arbitrary detentions.

Man arrested for defacing Michael Jackson's star

LOS ANGELES (R) — A man in his early twenties was arrested Tuesday after he had been defacing pop superstar Michael Jackson's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Passer-by Edward Lees performed a citizens arrest on the unidentified man after watching him spray Jackson's star — a bronze plaque embedded in the sidewalk — with fluorescent orange paint, and handed him over to police. The arrest was witnessed by a Reuters photographer.

Police smash large paedophile ring

LONDON (AFP) — Police said they had smashed a huge paedophile ring after a two-year investigation, seizing thousands of photographs and video-cassettes showing sex with children. More than 100 policemen staged simultaneous raids on 32 houses in England and Scotland, arresting four people for alleged drug and credit card offences. Police said it would take several weeks to sort through the evidence to that charges could be brought for paedophilia.

Woman on trial for 'bobbitt' eager suitor

SERLIN (AFP) — A 51-year-old German woman is to appear before a tribunal in the eastern town of Frankfurt on charges of cutting off the penis of an over-eager suitor, court officials said. The woman, who has not been identified, allegedly attacked the man in October 1992 after he had made sexual advances to her in her apartment. Prosecutors said he was never able to fulfill his wishes. They said the unemployed woman, who is divorced and an alcoholic, knocked her victim out by punching him and hitting him with a chair and then as he lay unconscious cut off his penis and tried to burn it. They said doctors tried to reattach the severed organ through several operations but failed. The penis will be presented in court as evidence for the prosecution. The trial had been scheduled to be held last year but was postponed. Psychiatrists are expected to testify Wednesday that the woman cannot be held responsible for her action as she is mentally unbalanced. Meanwhile in Turkey, a woman who cut off her lover's penis last week in Ankara was arrested by police Monday but later released without bail because the man did not press charges against her. The Turkish tabloid Hurriyet reported. It added that despite Zeynep Atici's claims that she cut off Abdullah Ismail Konak's penis after he had raped her, she will nonetheless have to appear in court and faces up to five years in prison for her action.

Toothmarks give rapist away

KOLDING, Denmark (AFP) — A man sought for raping a 19-year-old woman was identified thanks to the marks of his teeth on her penis, police said here Tuesday. The girl has bitten her 20-year-old assailant after the rape Sunday, and he had fled the scene, dropping his spectacles as he went. Police chief Iver Pedersen said. He was traced thanks to a local optician's records and arrested at his place of work after a doctor confirmed that his penis showed signs of injury. The man appeared in court Tuesday and admitted the incident, but said he had been drunk at the time. He was also vaccinated against possible tetanus infection. "A human bite can be as dangerous as that of an animal," Mr. Pedersen said.

Humiliated woman gets compensation

NEW DELHI (AFP) — A woman who was forced to parade naked through her village in northern India by a gang of youths has been awarded 100,000 rupees (\$3,000) in compensation by the chief minister of the state. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Mulayam Singh Yadav ordered the money to be paid to the woman, an "untouchable," or member of the lowest rung of the Hindu caste ladder, the Press Trust of India reported. The woman, whose family was involved in a land dispute, was stripped by a gang of youths on Jan. 21 and forced to parade naked through the village of Dauna. At least three policemen were suspended for failing to take any action against the culprits. Twelve persons have since been arrested.

Muster falls to unseeded Swede in Dubai Open

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The \$1 million Dubai Open tennis championship saw its first upset Wednesday when No. 2 seed Thomas Muster of Austria fell to Sweden's Henrik Holm 6-3, 6-4 in the second round.

The world No. 9 could not find his way through the steady cross-court backhand of the 49th-ranked Swede, who made Muster get deeper into unforced errors.

"I served very well, and really, I don't think he was prepared for the kind of tennis I was going to play," said Holm, who beat world No. 2 Michael Stich of Germany in the first round of the U.S. Open last year.

"Thomas likes to use his forehand, but I confused him by using a lot of cross court backhand which opened up the game," Holm added.

Earlier, world No. 14 Ivan Lendl of the United States expectedly made it to the quarterfinals with a 6-4, 6-2 victory over Russia's Andrei Cherkasov.

The former world no. 1 made the perfect start by breaking Cherkasov's serve in the opening game. He ran into the net to reach a clever drop shot from Cherkasov, ranked 23 places below Lendl, and lobbed over his head to earn break point and then hit a driving forehand to force an error from Cherkasov and warn him he was in for a battle.

Lendl broke serve to lead 4-3 and held on to take the set. Cherkasov continued to struggle in the second set, facing a break point in the first game and then losing his serve to go down 2-1.

During that game, Lendl called for an ATP tour supervisor, Thomas Karlberg, to discuss several missed line calls. But problems continued, with Lendl holding serve with aces to lead 3-1 and 4-2 after the balls had been called out by the linesmen and then overruled by the chair umpire.

Knicks rout Celts; Nets edge Sonics

NEW YORK (R) — Patrick Ewing had 23 points to lead seven New York Knicks in double figures as they crushed the Boston Celtics 114-79 Tuesday, their biggest margin of victory this season.

The Celtics came in with a season-high seven game win streak, but they ran into a Knicks team on the upswing after a 3-0 road trip on the west coast with the injured Charles Smith and Anthony Mason back from injury.

The Knicks, who led by as many as 39 points, extended their winning streak over the Celtics to four games. New York has won five straight games overall and 11 of its last 13.

At New Jersey, P.J. Brown hit two free throws with 19.2 seconds left in the fourth quarter to give the Nets a 104-103 triumph over the slumping Seattle SuperSonics.

Kenny Anderson had 26 points, Kevin Edwards added 19 and Derrick Coleman finished with 17 points, 14 rebounds and a career-high nine blocked shots for the Nets, who got their fifth straight home win and have won seven out of their last nine overall.

In another nail-biter, in Phoenix, Cedric Ceballos scored 37 points and Oliver Miller had five of his eight points in the final 2:07 as the Suns held off the Los Angeles Clippers 108-106.

Ron Harper scored 28 points, including 10 straight in the fourth quarter to give the Clippers a 104-102 lead with 2:31 left, but the Suns outscored them 6-2 the rest of the way.

At Utah, Karl Malone had 29 points and 12 rebounds and John Stockton added 24 points and 13 assists as the Jazz snapped a six-game losing streak to the Houston Rockets with a 104-88 victory.

Utah beat Houston for the first time in three meetings this season.

Hakeem Olajuwon had 20 points and Vernon Maxwell



Brian Williams of the Denver Nuggets (centre) looks for a way out as Chicago Bulls defenders Scott Williams (left) and Bill Wennington close in during first half action in their match held Tuesday. Chicago beat Denver 118-98 (APF)

and Scott Brooks each chipped in 16 for the Rockets, who have lost two straight games and six of their last nine.

In San Antonio, Dale Ellis scored a season-high 32 points and grabbed 10 rebounds as the Spurs defeated the Los Angeles Lakers 113-97.

David Robinson added 30 points and 11 rebounds to help the Spurs win their fourth straight game and ninth in a row at home.

In Denver, Scottie Pippen scored 28 points and Horace Grant and B.J. Armstrong added 19 apiece to lift the Chicago Bulls to a 138-98 defeat of the Nuggets.

Pippen has averaged 26 points over the last six games and led Chicago in scoring in

all six games.

The Bulls won for the ninth time in 10 games and scooped a four-game Denver winning streak.

In Milwaukee, Glen Rice scored 23 points and Steve Smith pumped in eight points in the final 3:40 to lift the Miami Heat to an 88-82 victory over the Bucks.

In Sacramento, Wayne Tisdale scored 30 points and Mitch Richmond added 21 as the Kings snapped a seven-game losing streak with a 102-97 victory over the Portland Trail Blazers.

At Indiana, Reggie Miller and Rik Smits scored 25 points apiece to lift the Pacers to a 116-96 victory over the Washington Bullets.

Graf, Navratilova survive tough challenges in Pan Pacific Open

TOKYO (R) — World number one Steffi Graf and defending champion Martina Navratilova overcame tough second round challenges Wednesday to move into the quarterfinals of the \$750,000 Pan Pacific women's tennis tournament.

Top-seeded Graf of Germany battled to beat Britain's Clare Wood 6-3, 6-4, while second seed Navratilova of the United States shrugged off a rusty start and first set loss to overwhelm Manon Bollegraf of the Netherlands 6-7 (6-8) 6-2, 6-1.

Playing on the fast carpet surface at Tokyo's metropolitan gymnasium, Graf conceded seven games in a match for the first time this year.

"It's very difficult to play a perfect match constantly," said the 24-year-old German, fresh from victory in last week's Australian Open at Melbourne.

"On this surface, if somebody serves well, it's really difficult to do anything. I've only had two days to get used to the court, so I'll need a little longer to get my rhythm," she

added with a shrug of the shoulders.

In a first set dominated by powerful serving, Graf had to wait until the eighth game to break her opponent and then serve out the set.

Wood seemed unfazed. Ranked 92 in the world, she stepped up her serve and return and, taking advantage of a lapse in Graf's concentration, strode to a 3-0 lead.

"My first serve was going well and I didn't give her a chance to dominate from the back," Wood said. She called it the best match of her career.

"I didn't return well, that was what did it," said Graf, twice winner of Asia's premier women's tournament.

"She served very well, so she didn't give me many chances," she added. Graf's determination and vast experience eventually saw her through, enabling her to break the Briton twice and wrap up the match in 61 minutes.

Meanwhile Navratilova, seeking her third title here and 167th of her illustrious career,

capitalised on Bollegraf's visible exhaustion to secure a berth in the quarterfinals.

"The key was to serve well in the first game of the second set because I was very disappointed after losing the first break," said Navratilova, who is playing her first tournament since losing in the second round of the New York Virginia Slims in mid-November.

Unleashing her powerful serve-and-volley game with topspin, the Czech-American world number three romped through the last two sets leaving her Dutch opponent helpless.

"This is as fast a surface as I've played on all year, so for me it's a real treat as I don't have to think what I'm doing," Navratilova, who upset Graf in the 1993 semi-final here, said.

She attributed the first set loss to some muscle pain in her ankle and hip, but she added: "The body's holding up pretty well. There are a few tweaks, but hopefully I'll be feeling better tomorrow."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Lindh snatches downhill win

SIERRA NEVADA, Spain (R) — Hilary Lindh, who won an Olympic silver medal two years ago but had never been on a World Cup podium before, snatched victory by one-hundredth of a second Wednesday in the last downhill before the Lillehammer Olympics. The 24-year-old Alaskan, starting from 23rd position, clocked two minutes 4.21 seconds down the course which will be used for the world championships next year. Frenchwoman Melanie Suchet, who could have claimed her first win but for a bad mistake in the closing metres of the race, was second in 2:04.22 with Italy's Isolde Kostner, the winner last week in the tragedy-marred Garmisch downhill, finished third in 2:04.65. Many of the favourites, stunned by the death of Austrian Ullrich Maier in Garmisch last Saturday, had stayed away. Kerrin Lee-Gartner, a friend of Maier, flew home to Canada Monday instead of travelling to Spain and said she did not yet know if she would defend her Olympic downhill in Lillehammer later this month. The Austrian team, including Veronika Stalhammer who was third in the World Cup downhill standings before Wednesday, also stayed away.

China soccer teams to hire foreigners

BEIJING (R) — To raise their playing standard and competitiveness, Chinese soccer teams should hire foreign players, the country's sports authorities have decided. The Nanfang daily, recovered in Beijing Wednesday, quoted sports officials as saying that, within the limits of its financial resources, each team should hire foreigners. It said that teams in Shanghai and Sheyang, in the northeast, have already hired Russian players and that other sides should emulate them. China did not qualify for the 1994 World Cup and is desperately looking at ways to raise its playing standard.

Italy cracks down on soccer violence

ROME (AP) — Soccer officials and the transportation minister agreed on measures Tuesday to control fan violence on trains following the death of a man who tried to escape hooligans two days earlier. Teams will have to provide lists of recognised fan clubs to the Italian Soccer Federation, which will pass the lists on to the transport ministry. Fans taking special trains to matches will be required to show a train ticket as well as a stadium ticket before boarding. Only approved clubs will be allowed to reserve the special trains, said federation spokesman Stefano Balducci. The train tickets will include an extra charge to fund an insurance policy to cover damage to the state railroad. The measures were announced following a meeting between federation officials and Transport Minister Raffaele Costa. Much of the soccer violence in Italy is associated with unruly skinheads, who often belong to organised clubs. The clubs are not sponsored by the teams, and the majority are peaceful.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMARA MERSHCH
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SENDING THE RIGHT SIGNAL

East-West vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♠ 10 4
♥ Q 9 7 6 5 2
♦ 10 5
♣ 10 7 6

EAST
♠ A 3 2
♥ A 7 6 5
♦ K 10
♣ 9 7 6 4

SOUTH
♠ K Q J 9
♥ A J 4 3
♦ K Q J 8
♣ A

The bidding:
South West North East
2 ♠ Pass 2 NT Pass
3 ♠ Pass 5 ♠ Pass
Pass Pass

Opening lead: Three of ♠

The standard method of signaling a strong holding in a suit is by discarding a high card in that suit. But what if you don't hold a high card? That's the time to use some imagination.

We can think of several bids that South might choose as an initial action, but a discard bid of two spades is not one of them. On the next round, that led to an aggressive

Harding maintains innocence

PORTLAND, Ore. (R) — Figure skating champion Tonya Harding is holding fast to her claim of innocence — and her Olympic dream — after accusations that she authorised the attack on her rival Nancy Kerrigan.

As a panel appointed by the U.S. Figure Skating Association to determine Harding's fate met for the first time late Tuesday, the skater's former husband, Jeff Gillooly, pleaded guilty to his role in the plot against Kerrigan and accused Harding of helping to carry it out.

Gillooly, 26, told investigators that Harding authorised the assault on Kerrigan with the words, "Ok, let's do it," as they drove in his truck Dec. 28

after a meeting with Harding bodyguard Shawn Eckardt, according to a 55-page summary of his confession released after he pleaded.

On Jan. 6, Kerrigan was struck in the right leg by a man armed with a metal club after a practice session before the national championships in Detroit.

The account of the plot given by Gillooly and his lawyer, Ron Hoevet, was strongly denied by Harding's lawyer, Robert Weaver. He noted that his client has not been charged and said that if there are formal charges, "she intends to respond in a court of law."

"I know that it would be very easy for many people,

based on what they saw today, to conclude that Tonya Harding was somehow involved in this," Weaver said at a news conference.

William Hybl, chairman of the five-member panel appointed by the Figure Skating Association, said in Colorado Springs that the group watched some of Tuesday's events on television. It plans to meet again Friday as it considers whether "reasonable grounds exist to pursue further disciplinary proceedings against Tonya Harding."

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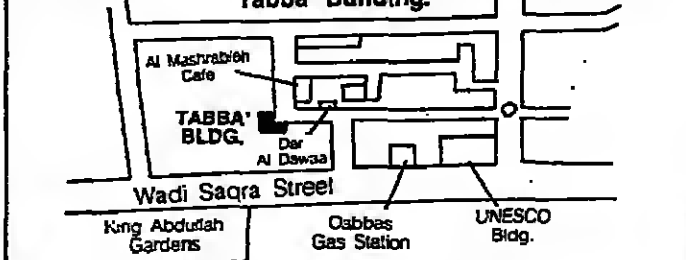
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Iran: Turkish raid on villages 'a mistake'

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran accepted Wednesday that the bombing of two Iranian border villages by Turkish air force jets last week which killed nine people was a mistake. Iranian armed forces chief Mansour Sattari told the Tehran Times daily: "It was by mistake that the Turkish missiles landed in Iranian territory." Iran said nine people were killed and 19 others wounded when "several rockets and bombs" hit Nokan and Kanizad village in the northwestern Sardasht region during the Turkish strike Friday, aimed at a Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) base in northern Iraq. Mr. Sattari said no Turkish plane entered Iranian airspace, and "the Turkish pilots were not experienced enough to avoid the tragedy." The pilots "did not fire missiles towards Iranian territory intentionally," he added.

'Iraqi runaway met Kuwaiti captives in Iraq'

KUWAIT (R) — An Iraqi who escaped to Iran from an Iraqi prison said five Kuwaitis including a 12-year-old boy were among fellow inmates, a newspaper reported on Wednesday. Iraq, which occupied Kuwait for seven months in 1990-91, denies it still holds any Kuwaiti prisoners. Kuwait's Al Watan newspaper said in a report from Tehran the unnamed prisoner said he saw the five in Iraq's Al Rashid prison late last year. One was a 12-year-old boy. Another was an army officer, Al Watan reported. The Al Watan report did not say why the Iraqi had been imprisoned. It reported him as saying he had been moved around various prisons and detention camps.

U.N. chief sees 'breakthrough' in Cyprus

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Secretary-General Boutros Ghali praised as a "breakthrough" Tuesday the acceptance of confidence-building measures by rival Greek and Turkish Cypriots. The island has been divided into a northern Turkish region and a Greek area in the south since Turkish troops invaded in 1974 after Cypriots favouring union with Greece took over the government. U.N. peacekeepers patrol the line between north and south, but troop-contributing nations have been withdrawing, citing lack of progress towards an overall political settlement. But Dr. Ghali said letters from Turkish Cypriot leader Rauf Denktaş and Greek Cypriot President Glafcos Clerides state their willingness to begin talks on the confidence-building steps. These include plans to reopen Nicosia international airport under U.N. administration and to reopen the uninhabited town of Varosha, a former resort in the Turkish-controlled zone. Both sides are to negotiate how to implement these measures proposed by the secretary-general.

Indian envoy meets Kuwait minister

KUWAIT (R) — India's ambassador to Kuwait said Wednesday he had met Foreign Minister Sheikh Sabah Al Ahmad Al Sabah Tuesday to convey his concern over three unexplained attacks on Sikhs including two killings. "I apprised him of my concern and my community's concern," Ambassador Prem Singh said by telephone. "He (Sheikh Sabah) assured me that the government of Kuwait would do everything necessary regarding this and that the Kuwaitis themselves are concerned by these incidents." Indian expatriates are mystified by the attacks. They say they cannot rule out the possibility that they might have been targeted as a group, and the Sikhs are the most vulnerable because they are easily identifiable by their turbans.

Israeli industrialists on Egypt trip

TEL AVIV (R) — Top Israeli industrialists left on a two-day groundbreaking visit to Egypt on Wednesday, planning to meet their counterparts and Egyptian officials. They said it was the first time Egyptian industrialists had invited them for such a meeting despite a 15-year-old Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty. The team is headed by Dan Propper, head of the Israel industrialists association. A spokesman for the group said they would make proposals for closer business cooperation. He said Egypt's attitude about trade relations had improved in recent months. Israel has in the past complained about a "cold peace" with Egypt, the only Arab state to make peace with it.

Egyptian customs catch N. Korean diplomat

CAIRO (R) — Egyptian customs stopped a North Korean diplomat at Cairo Airport Tuesday night and confiscated five video recorders he was trying to smuggle in, officials said on Wednesday. The diplomat, who is based in Kuwait, gave up the recorders and agreed to pay a fine of 50,000 Egyptian pounds (\$14,800). He will not be charged, they said. The officials named the diplomat as Ryu Hyon and said he was a third secretary for commercial affairs. North Korea has no embassy in Kuwait but it does have a trade representative. Diplomats do not have immunity outside the countries to which they are accredited. The Egyptian customs were suspicious of the North Korean because he had been making the trip from Kuwait about seven times a month, the officials said. Imported video recorders fetch about four or five times as much in Egypt as they cost in the low-tax Gulf countries. A spokesman for the North Korean embassy in Cairo said he knew nothing about the case. North Korean diplomats did not do such things, he added.

Sudan minister appeals for aid for south

KHARTOUM (R) — Minister of Social Planning Ali Osman Mohammad Taha has appealed to international donors for \$40 million for relief aid for Operation Lifeline Sudan which is trying to prevent starvation in the war-torn south. The official Sudan News Agency (SUNA) on Wednesday quoted Mr. Taha as saying Sudan was committed to deliver relief supplies to all the needy in both government- and rebel-held areas. (see page 2). He said talks in Nairobi last week to facilitate relief operations in the south had been derailed by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army which proposed the use of poor-quality roads in Equatoria state where much fighting has taken place. Mr. Taha, however, indicated an agreement had been reached on the proposed corridors in Upper Nile and Bahr Al Ghazal states.

Turkey to send medical aid to Baghdad

ANKARA (R) — Turkey will send medical aid worth \$400,000 to Baghdad this week to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people under a trade embargo since the 1991 Gulf war, a Foreign Ministry official said Wednesday. "There is great suffering there due to a lack of medicines," spokesman Ferhat Ataman said. "So we have decided to send aid through our Baghdad embassy to the Iraqi authorities. Humanitarian aid is outside United Nations sanctions," he added. Turkish President Suleyman Demirel and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak reiterated on Tuesday their backing for Iraq's territorial integrity and said the suffering should be eased for the people of Iraq. Mr. Ataman told reporters Turkey's Red Crescent relief organisation would transport the medicines and health care supplies to Baghdad by road through northern Iraq.

Klestil hires lawyer, suggests wife do same

VIENNA (R) — Austrian President Thomas Klestil has engaged a lawyer to represent him in a formal separation from his estranged wife. Edith, the Austrian magazine News said on Wednesday. The weekly said Mr. Klestil's lawyer, in a letter to the Austrian first lady, suggested that she do likewise. But it quoted the lawyer as denying this was the first step to a formal divorce. "It is correct that the president has asked me to reach an agreement with his wife which will formalise the de facto separation as generously as possible," lawyer Gerhard Wildmoser was quoted as saying. News added, without naming his sources, that a legal battle was brewing over the couple's financial holdings. It said Edith Klestil "emptied Klestil's safe completely when she left the official residence, taking a number of bankbooks and securities."

U.N. troops under attack in Bosnia

SARAJEVO (R) — United Nations troops have come under heavy fire from Bosnia's warring factions in an escalating wave of violence against peacekeepers and aid workers, U.N. officials said on Wednesday.

U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) soldiers were shelled or shot at six times within 24 hours. None of them was hurt.

Lieutenant-Colonel Bill Aikmar, UNPROFOR spokesman in Sarajevo, said Serb forces besieging the Bosnian capital hit a U.N. armoured personnel carrier with several 10mm rounds on an exposed city centre street on Tuesday. In a separate incident, jeeps entering and leaving a French U.N. base came under Bosnian Serb small-arms fire.

The city was relatively quiet on Wednesday as prime ministers Benazir Bhutto and Tansu Ciller of Turkey arrived for a brief visit aimed at drawing attention to the humanitarian crisis in Bosnia.

About 250 Sarajevans greeted the Muslim stateswomen as they entered the sandbagged Bosnian presidency building after being driven from U.N.-controlled Sarajevo airport under heavy security in an armoured U.N. car over Serb-Muslim front lines.

They met Bosnian government leaders and toured a hospital full of war-wounded before flying out later in the day.

"We are here to make sure that (the Bosnians) realise they are not forgotten in the middle of Europe," Ms. Ciller said on a brief stopover at Zagreb airport.

Ms. Bhutto said it was tragic to see that in Europe principles of peace and stability were being violated, including the U.N. Charter which prohibits the change of borders.

The attacks on peacekeepers highlighted the growing dangers facing U.N. soldiers and aid workers battling against the odds to deliver food and medical supplies to thousands of trapped civilians.

Bosnia's Muslim-led government said foreign Muslim extremists, killed a British aid worker last week and shot and wounded two other Britons. Three suspects in the kidnapping were killed in a shootout with pursuing Bosnian security forces on Monday.

In further attacks on U.N. troops, Col. Aikmar said Croat forces fired mortar and small-arms rounds at a U.N. supply convoy returning from government-held Fojnica in central Bosnia, disabling an empty fuel tanker and blowing out four tyres of an armoured personnel carrier.

In Vitez, a barrage of small-arms fire hit a vehicle on which British troops were doing maintenance work. And in the northwest enclave of Bihać, Serb gunners peppered a French U.N. post with 40 rounds.

PLO in Gulf denies financial crisis over

ABU DHABI (AFP) — A financial crisis caused by suspension of Gulf aid is still rocking the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) despite official statements the problem is over, PLO sources in the Gulf said on Wednesday.

The sources were reacting to comments by Mohammad Jihad, a Central Committee member of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat's mainstream Fatah faction, that the organisation had overcome the crisis after receiving \$29 million in fresh aid from Arab and other countries.

"What Mohammad Jihad said is untrue," said an Abu Dhabi-based PLO official who requested anonymity. "The crisis is continuing. We have not received our salaries for more than eight months."

Several employees at the PLO missions in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and other oil-rich Gulf states, contacted by AFP, confirmed they had not received their salaries since mid-1993.

They said in a circular sent by the PLO's foreign minister, Farouk Kaddoumi four months ago asking them to resign if they want was still in force.

GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar,

Oman and the UAE — were the main bankrollers of the PLO before the Iraqi invasion, providing it with more than \$2 billion in private donations from Gulf sheikhs and businessmen and a five-per cent tax on Palestinians living in the region.

Repeated attempts by the PLO to mend fences with the GCC were crowned with a reconciliation meeting between Mr. Arafat and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh last week. Kuwait, however, has said it will not deal with Mr. Arafat again.

The PLO's financial woes coincided with its peace accord with Israel, which could also be a boon in financial terms. The Sept. 13 deal has already won the PLO pledges for \$2 billion in aid in the autonomous areas.

In an interview with Wednesday's UAE daily Al Khaleej, Mr. Jihad had said the PLO had received \$15 million from Greece, \$5 million from Malaysia, \$3 million from Indonesia, \$2 million from Turkey, \$2 million from Algeria and around \$2 million from Saudi Arabia.

"The PLO has overcome its financial crisis," he said. "We have disbursed two-months salaries for all PLO staff."

Algerian political activist shot dead

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Suspected Muslim fundamentalists have assassinated an activist in Algeria's Al Tahadi (challenge) political party, Mohammad Touali, the party announced in a statement Wednesday.

Mr. Touali, 32, was kidnapped overnight Tuesday and his body was subsequently discovered, the party said.

He was the second member of Al Tahadi and the fourth political activist to be slain by suspected Islamic extremists since the Jan. 27 murder of another official in the party, Ferhat Chibout.

The statement did not specify where Mr. Touali lived nor where the body was found. He was an employee of a state-owned company in the eastern town of Constantine.

His murder followed the killing Tuesday in the Casbah district of Algiers of French journalist Olivier Quenennec and the wounding by gunmen of the cameraman's Australian colleague, Scott Allan White.

Mr. White was Wednesday at the Ain Nadja military hospital in a suburb of the capital in very serious condition.

Armed Islamic groups have waged a war on the regime, targeting foreigners as part of their campaign, since the cancellation in January 1992 of a general election the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

The FIS, now outlawed, has blamed alleged government

death squads for carrying out some of the killings.

Exiled FIS leaders roundly condemned attacks on foreigners and intellectuals Wednesday and blamed military "death squads" for some murders.

A statement from the exiled parliamentary delegation of the FIS was made available as Al Tahadi announced the Touali murder.

The FIS statement, released in New York, said it opposed "attacks against individuals who express themselves through exercising their right to freedom of thought and expression," in a three-page statement delivered to AFP.

The delegation appealed "for everyone to renounce violence against Algerians, civilian or military, and foreigners who are not directing or taking part in security operations."

The FIS statement said political violence in Algeria was "a direct result of the military coup d'etat and the junta's elimination of all forms of democratic expression."

"Defending Algeria and its people against the enemies of popular will does not require us to engage in violent acts against civilians — Algerians and foreigners," the statement added.

Many of the murders of writers, politicians, journalists and scholars pointed to "the military and its death squads," the statement said.



(From left to right) Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin and Pakistani Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto chat with a young patient while Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller talks to staff at a hospital in Sarajevo Wednesday (AFP photo)

No condition for bomb trial in neutral state, Libya says

TUNIS (R) — A top Libyan official said Wednesday that Tripoli would not set conditions for the trial in a neutral country of two Libyan suspects in the 1988 bombing of a U.S. airliner over Scotland.

But he repeated it was out of the question for his country to hand over the suspects to the United States or Britain.

"We will not set conditions," said Saad Mujber, deputy speaker in charge of foreign affairs in Libya's General People's Congress (parliament).

"We have only to sit and agree on how the suspects can go (to a neutral state), where they reside, who will be responsible for them, and who will investigate," he told Reuters.

"These are formal measures on which we can agree in a few days if not a few hours," added Mr. Mujber, who is a close aide to Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi and was until now ambassador to France. He spoke by telephone from Paris.

It was the first time a senior Libyan official clearly stated no conditions would be attached for the two Libyan agents to stand trial at a neutral venue.

Scottish law professor Robert Black suggested this month that the Libyans could be tried at the Hague, seat of the International Court of Justice, under Scottish law. Britain and the United

States insist on a trial in America, home of the Pan Am airliner, or in Britain, where it exploded in mid-air over the village of Lockerbie, killing 270 people.

Libya is under United Nations sanctions for refusing to turn the men over for trial in the West.

The Libyan congress last week rejected any surrender of the two suspects when it insisted on the respect of the Libyan law which prohibits surrender of Libyans to foreign countries.

It was a reversal of its own resolution in 1992 which said it would not object if they volunteered to stand trial in the United States or Britain.

"A handover to the United States or Britain is out of the question. They (the West) can forget about it. A handover is against the Libyan law... but the congress approves for the two suspects to stand trial in a neutral country," Mr. Mujber said.

He added that the two suspects, Abdul Baset Ali Al Megrahi and Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah, and their defence lawyers also agree on a trial in a neutral country.

In addition to turning over the two suspects in the Lockerbie case in which 270 people were killed, the Security Council says Libya must satisfy demands of a French magistrate

investigating the mid-air bombing of a French UTA flight over Niger in 1989 which killed all 171 aboard.

Mr. Mujber said Libya, which in 1992 barred entry to Libya for the French magistrate travelling aboard an army ship, is now ready to allow him entry to complete his investigations.

"The invitation to the French magistrate to visit Libya in order to investigate is still and will stay valid..." he said.

Mr. Mujber strongly rejected accusations that Libya was playing for time in order to prevent the implementation of the U.N. Security Council resolutions.

"That is untrue... Libya is willing more than any other to get out from this situation, because it is the Libyan people who are the first to suffer from the sanctions," he said.

In April 1992 the Security Council banned all civilian flights to and from Libya, the sale of aircraft parts and arms, and called on its members to reduce diplomatic ties with the country.

Since December last year, these sanctions were tightened when the council demanded the freeze of Libya's financial assets abroad and prohibited sale of oil-related equipment for refineries and for transporting oil.

Violence mars Iran anniversary

TEHRAN (AFP) — Several people were injured and others arrested in a rare outburst of sectarian violence in southeast Iran, marred celebrations for the 15th anniversary of the Islamic Republic. Newspapers said Wednesday.

The protest on Tuesday came the same day as a gunman fired shots during a speech by President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

And the mainly Shiite Muslim country's economic plight also cast a shadow over the anniversary when parliament cut the annual budget.

An angry crowd gathered Tuesday outside the main mosque in Zahedan, one of the few Iranian cities with a Sunni Muslim majority, after rumours spread that a Sunni mosque had been destroyed in Mashhad in northeastern Iran.

"Counter-revolutionary elements joined the crowd and started throwing stones at police, breaking shop windows," Hamshahri newspaper said.

The Interior Ministry described the violence as a "counter-revolutionary plot" and said public buildings, houses and military vehicles had been attacked.

The security forces arrested demonstrators who wanted to "sow disorder and trouble in Zahedan" at the start of the official ceremonies marking the anniversary of the 1979 revolution which toppled the Shah, the ministry said.

No figure was given for the number of demonstrators involved.

The newspaper Kayhan reported Tuesday that the armed opposition group Mujahadeen-e-Khalq was preparing "terrorist activities" in Sistan va Baluchistan province, of which Zahedan is the main town, "with the backing of Saudi Arabia," which sees itself as the leader of the Sunni branch of Islam.

Iranian air force is nearly rebuilt — chief

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran's air force, seriously depleted during the 1980-88 war with Iraq, has been rebuilt and expanded and is ready to counter any threat to the Islamic Republic, the air force commander said in an interview published Wednesday.

Brigadier-General Mansoor Sattari told the Tehran Times daily that the 15,000-man air force has "reached self-sufficiency in all fields, including pilot training, missiles, radar, air defence, maintenance and repair, manufacture of parts and basic repair of facilities."

The English-language daily, which reflects the thinking of President Hashemi Rafsanjani, quoted Gen. Sattari as saying: "We constantly patrol the international waters and have a watchful eye on the moves of the foreign warships there."

"If the foreigners pose any threat, we'll counter them with our might," he declared.

The U.S. Navy has the largest foreign presence in the region, with some 20 warships in the Gulf, the Red Sea and off Somalia. The British and French also have warships in the Gulf region, which the Iranians consider their domain.

The Iranians are conducting a major arms buildup, which they say is primarily aimed at rebuilding their armed forces which were seriously run down by the end of the war with Iraq. But U.S. and other officials claim Iran is seeking to become the dominant military power in the Gulf.

Since 1988, Iran has spent an estimated \$7 billion on replacing the aging U.S.-built jets that formed the backbone of the air force before the 1979 Islamic revolution with Russian-made aircraft.

It has purchased at least two squadrons of advanced MiG-29 interceptors and one squadron of long-range SU-24 fighter-bombers.

The air force and the Revolutionary Guards Corps, which has its own air wing, also have several squadrons equipped with the F-7 fighter, the Chinese variant of the MiG-21.

The air force's offensive capability is reported to have been enhanced with an undermanned number of long-range TU-26 backfire bombers.

According to Western military sources, Tehran is understood to have placed orders for more MiG-29s, SU-24s and MiG-31s.

The Iranians also are believed to have put into service some of 115 Iraqi warplanes — mainly two squadrons of SU-24s and a reduced squadron of MiG-29s — flown to Iran for safekeeping during the 1991 Gulf war, when Iraq faced the U.S.-led allied coalition.

By recent estimates, the Iranians have some 200-plus combat jets in their order of battle. Western officials believe their objective is a 300-plane fleet.

About half of the current inventory are U.S.-made F-4s, F-5s and F-14s. These will presumably be eventually phased out because of the acute shortage of spares as the air force switches to predominantly Russian equipment.

Gen. Sattari said that in contrast to before the revolution, when the air force was almost wholly dependent on U.S.-made equipment and personnel, the air force no longer uses any "foreign military specialists."

Faced with a Western arms embargo, the Iranians made significant advances in developing an indigenous weapons industry during the war with Iraq.

The Iranians have developed a number of short-range missiles, reportedly with Chinese help. Western intelligence sources say Iran and North Korea are currently working on a joint missile project. Both Tehran and Pyongyang have denied the reports.

Iran has been seeking to construct a large missile arsenal since its war with Iraq.

COLUMN

Yeltsin celebrates 63rd birthday

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin celebrated his 63rd birthday in "full health," waiting for friends to offer him a new tennis racket to replace his damaged one. Mr. Yeltsin, who was due to spend the evening celebrating with his family, added a replacement for his worn out electric razor to the birthday wish list revealed to the Komsomolskaya Pravda paper. The Russian president received a birthday bouquet of flowers from Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, and red roses, from the speaker of the Duma, Ivan Rybkin. Former Prime Minister Yegor Gaidar wished Yeltsin "physical and moral strength, patience and determination."

Charles' attacker undergoing psychiatric tests

SYDNEY (R) — The Australian university student who fired a blank pistol twice as he lunged at Britain's Prince Charles during Australia Day celebrations is undergoing psychiatric assessment in prison, a jail spokesman said Wednesday. David Kang, 23, is charged with a number of offences, including attacking an internationally protected person, and faces 17 years in jail for his attack at Sydney's Darling Harbour on Jan. 26. Mr. Kang has been remanded in Sydney's maximum security Long Bay Jail until his next court appearance on Feb. 4. A spokesman for the New South Wales Corrective Services Department said the decision to psychiatrically assess Mr. Kang was made by prison staff an initial interview to determine which section of the prison he should be placed. "In Kang's case they recommended he go to the jail's hospital... where he is being assessed by the jail's psychiatrist," said the spokesman. "The Department of corrective services does this assessment as a matter of course if they feel something is not right."

German princess breaks arm skiing

REGENSBURG, Germany (AFP) — Princess Gloria Von Thurn Und Taxis, reputed to be among Europe's richest aristocrats, has broken her right arm skiing in the Rocky Mountains, a spokesman for the princess said here Tuesday. The 33-year-old princess returned from Aspen, Colorado, last week, the spokesman said. He did not say when the accident happened. The princess, whose 64-year-old husband died in 1990, manages an estimated two-billion-mark (\$1.15 billion) fortune until her 10-year-old son comes of age.

Snatched French children found in England

TORQUAY, England (AFP) — Three children snatched by their parents from the home near Paris where they had been placed by a court were found in this southwest England resort town, police said. The police, acting on a request from Interpol, found the three aged between six and 11, with their mother and four-month-old baby sister in a holiday bed-sitter. The children were placed with a local authority foster-mother pending their return to France. The two boys aged eight and 11 and a girl of six had been removed from their parents' care by the French court because of alleged mistreatment.

Computer hacker called queen on private line

LONDON (AFP) — A computer hacker claimed early Wednesday he had obtained personal phone numbers of members of Britain's royal family and had once called the reigning monarch, Queen Elizabeth II. The man, who only identified himself as "Mike," told the Press Association he had gained access to the British Telecom System to scan files containing confidential information and ex-directory telephone numbers. He said it was easy to hack into files once user numbers were obtained and this could be done by posing as a telephone engineer and asking unsuspecting staff for the number so an imaginary fault could be checked.